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BIOGRAPHY

LIFE OF WELLINGTON
BY G. R. GLEIG

GEORGE ROBERT GLEIG, born at Stirling in 1796, son of Bishop Gleig. Served in the army, 1813–14. Ordained in 1820; Chaplain of Chelsea Hospital, 1834; Chaplain-General of the Forces, 1844–75. Died at Stratfield Turgis, July 1888.

THE LIFE OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

G. R. GLEIG

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INTRODUCTION

The vital thing to remember about Gleig, the biographer of Wellington, is that he was also the author of *The Subaltern*, which is decidedly one of the very best of the Wellington novels. That story, whose second edition was dedicated (by a characteristic half-granted permission) to the duke, opens in May 1813, and it brings us, later in that year, to a direct impression of Wellington. The great duke is there sketched from the life and without any fictive colours by the subaltern, who was G. R. Gleig himself. The background is Spain, the hill foreground the top of the Quatracone, which the battalion has just reached, when four mounted officers appear, one of them riding a little ahead of the rest.

"He who rode in front," says the autobiographical novelist and chronicler, "was a thin, well-made man, apparently of the middle stature, and not yet past the prime of life. His dress was a plain grey frock, buttoned close to the chin; a cocked hat, covered with oilskin; grey pantaloons, with boots buckled at the side; and a steel-mounted light sabre. Though I knew not who he was, there was a brightness in his eye which bespoke him something more than an aide-de-camp or a general of brigade; nor was I long left in doubt. There were in the ranks many veterans who had served in the Peninsula during some of the earlier campaigns; these instantly recognised their old leader, and the cry of 'Duro, Duro!' the familiar title given by the soldiers to the Duke of Wellington, was raised. This was followed by reiterated shouts, to which he replied by taking off his hat and bowing, when, after commending the appearance of the corps, and chatting for a moment with the commanding officer, he advised that a halt should take place where we were, and rode on.

"As I had never seen the great captain of the day before, it will be readily imagined that I looked at him on the present occasion with a degree of admiration and respect such as a soldier of seventeen years of age, devoted to his profession, is likely to feel for the man whom he regards as its brightest

ornament. There was in his general aspect nothing indicative of a life spent in hardships and fatigues; nor any expression of care or anxiety in his countenance. On the contrary, his cheek, though bronzed with frequent exposure to the sun, had on it the ruddy hue of health, while a smile of satisfaction played about his mouth, and told, more plainly than words could have spoken, how perfectly he felt himself at his ease Of course I felt, as I gazed upon him, that an army under his command could not be beaten; and I had frequent opportunities afterwards of perceiving how far such a feeling goes towards preventing defeat."

George R. Gleig was born at Stirling in 1796, son of the Bishop of Brechin. He went to Balliol College, Oxford, as a Snell exhibitioner, in 1811; and soon showed his military ambition by leaving the 'varsity to enter the army. He served in the Peninsula in 1813 and 1814 and was thrice wounded there, and thrice again in America. Following Waterloo, he returned to Oxford, took his B.A. and M.A., and was eventually ordained in 1820. Six years later appeared *The Subaltern;* and thereafter the story of his life as a country parson and army chaplain must be read between the lines of his multifarious books. In 1834 Gleig was made chaplain of Chelsea Hospital, whose popular record he wrote afterwards; in 1844 he became chaplain-general of the queen's forces, and in 1846 inspector-general of military schools. He was, as this book of his shows, very much of the duke's political faith, —a sound Tory and a hearty and orthodox churchman. He died in July 1888 at Stratfield Turgis.

Brialmont's *Life of Wellington*, on which Gleig's is closely based, was published at Paris in 1856-7. The English Brialmont-Gleig originally appeared in four volumes in 1858-60. Two later editions followed, in each of which Gleig's hand becomes more apparent. The present volume is a reprint of the third, or People's, edition of 1864.

1909.

The following are his chief works:—

Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans, 1821; The Subaltern (*Blackwood*), 1825; The Chelsea Pensioners, 1829; The Country Curate, 1830; A History of the Bible, 1830-31; Allan Breck, 1834; The Chronicles of Waltham, 1834, 1861; Sequel to same, Things Old and New (*The Novel Times*, vol. i.), 1845; Life of Sir Thomas Munro, 1830; Lives of Military Commanders (Lardner), 1830, etc.; History of the British Empire of India, 1830-1835; The Hussar, 1837; Chelsea

Hospital and its Traditions, 1838; Germany, Bohemia, and Hungary visited in 1837, 1839; Life of Warren Hastings, 1841; Memoir of Major-General Craufurd, 1842; Sketch of the Military History of Great Britain, 1845; Sale's Brigade in Afghanistan, 1846; The Story of the Battle of Waterloo, 1847, 1907; Life of Lord Clive, 1848, 1907; The Light Dragoon, 1851; The Leipzig Campaign, 1852, 1856; India and its Army, 1857; Essays: Biographical, Historical, and Miscellaneous, 1858; Life of Arthur, First Duke of Wellington (Founded on Brialmont's Work), 4 vols., 1858-60; revised ed., 1862; People's ed., 1864; The Soldier's Manual of Devotion, 1862; Life of Sir Walter Scott (from the *Quarterly*), 1871; History of the Reign of George III., to the Battle of Waterloo, etc., 1873; The Great Problem: can it be solved? 1876; Personal Reminiscences of the First Duke of Wellington, ed. by Mary E. Gleig, 1904.

The author's works include also two volumes of sermons. *The National Library* was conducted by him, and he edited a series of school books, to which he contributed a History of England. He was for many years a contributor to *Fraser*, *Blackwood*, the *Edinburgh*, and the *Quarterly*.

ADVERTISEMENT

In this revised edition of the *Life of the Duke of Wellington*, I have kept two objects steadily in view: first, to paint the duke himself exactly as he was; and next, to meet the possible wishes of readers, and they are not few, to whom the minute details of military and political operations are not very attractive.

To describe the career of the foremost general of his age, without telling how he carried on war and achieved great successes, is indeed impossible. And as little possible would it be to speak of a statesman and a politician, leaving unnoticed the stream of public affairs, the course of which he contributed to guide, or by which he was carried along. But writing as I now do for others than professional soldiers and statesmen, my endeavour has been so to handle these points of history, as that as little as possible they shall stand between my readers and the true subject of my narrative, the duke himself. It seems to me, having now accomplished my task, that neither the continuity of the narrative, nor its value as a record of great public events, is damaged by the process. And I am willing to believe that on others the same impression will be produced. But however this may be, one thing is certain, that by following no other course could I hope to achieve the ends which I had set before me: namely, while lightening my story, to produce a portrait of my hero, such as shall do full justice to his great qualities, without seeking to hide or to explain away the weaknesses which he shared in common with his fellow-men.

It will be seen that in following up these designs, I have made freer use than I formerly ventured to do of sources of private information that were open to me. Of the duke's remarks upon men and things, many, which were originally given in substance only, are here set down as he delivered them. Some of the peculiarities in his strongly-marked character are now for the first time brought forward; and stories are told, which on former occasions might have fitted in but indifferently with graver matters then under discussion. I am confident that neither the most sensitive of the duke's personal

friends, nor the bitterest of his political enemies (if any such still survive), will see the smallest reason to be dissatisfied or offended at this change of plan. On the other hand, it appears to me that multitudes whom the record of his glory, in wars and political contests long passed away, might repel, will be attracted by the new arrangement to their own great gain. Wherefore "the People's Edition" of the Life of THE DUKE passes out of my hands without any misgivings or hesitation on my part; first, because I persuade myself that "the people" will certainly read it; and, next, because I feel that there is not a man among them "so high, so low, so rich, so poor, but that he will be benefited by the exercise, if it only stimulate him to follow in all things, as the great duke did before him, the guiding star of duty through life."

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THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

CHAPTER I

HIS PEDIGREE AND EARLY LIFE

ARTHUR, first Duke of Wellington, was the fourth son of Garret, first Earl of Mornington, by the eldest daughter of Arthur Hill, Viscount Dungannon. He derived his descent from Walter Colley, or Cowley, a Rutlandshire Esquire, who settled in the county of Kilkenny, during the reign of Henry VIII., and a descendant of whom, Richard Colley, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, took the name of Wesley in consequence of his adoption by Garret Wesley of Westmeath, who had married his aunt and made him his heir.

The first rather noticeable incident in the history of the great duke occurs, therefore, so to speak, previously to his birth. A Colley by right of lineage, he becomes a Wesley by adoption, a name which is subsequently changed to Wellesley, though at what precise time, and for what special reason, there is nothing on record to show.

Richard Colley Wesley, after sitting for a while in the Irish House of Commons, was raised to the peerage, and became Baron Mornington of the kingdom of Ireland. His eldest son, Garret, succeeded him in the title and in his estates, and was advanced in 1759 to the dignity of an earldom. But this elevation in rank brought with it no addition to his fortunes, which, on the contrary, he appears to have considerably reduced by electioneering and other extravagances. Garret, first Earl of Mornington, distinguished himself as a musician, and became the composer of many chants, anthems, and glees, which have been much admired. It is said of him also that he was a good deal addicted to political intrigue. This may or may not have been the case, but if it were, one thing is certain, that, so far as his own interest was concerned, he intrigued to little purpose; for he died in 1781, leaving a widow with nine children, in what

may fairly be described, looking to their social position, as very straightened circumstances.

The next curious circumstance which we are called upon to notice, in glancing over the career of the great Duke of Wellington, is this, that both the time and the place of his birth are hidden in obscurity. The register book of the parish of St. Peter in Dublin would make it appear that he was baptised in that parish on the 30th of April, 1769. An old Dublin newspaper states as a fact that he was born in the Irish capital, on the 3rd of April, whereas the woman who nursed his mother through her confinement always declared that his birth occurred on the 6th of March, at Dangan Castle, in the county of Westmeath. This latter assumption was formally taken up and affirmed by a vote of the Irish House of Commons; yet what avail even votes of parliament when people are determined not to be controlled by them? The late duke's mother persistently asserted that her son Arthur was born on the 1st of May. The duke himself kept the 1st of May as his birthday; but neither mother nor son, as far as I have been able to discover, ever decided the question of place between Dublin and Dangan. We are thus thrown upon conjecture in reference to points which, though not perhaps of much importance in themselves, become important through their connection with one who was destined in after life to fill so wide a page in history. Nor must I forget, while upon this subject, to point out that the same year brought into the world the two most remarkable men of their age, whether as warriors or as politicians: Napoleon Buonaparte, and Arthur, Duke of Wellington.

Few tales, and none of them very important, are told of the childhood and early youth of the latter of these heroes. Childhood and early youth were stages in the duke's existence of which he seldom spoke; and never except abruptly, and as it were by accident. But enough escaped him from time to time to show that he did not look back upon them with much pleasure. There is reason to believe that, from some cause or another, he was not a favourite with his mother till his great deeds in after life constrained her to be proud of him. She seems to have taken it into her head that he was the dunce of the family, and to have treated him, if not harshly, with marked neglect; and being herself a woman of great ability and strength of character, she gave the law in this as in other respects to her own household. While the utmost pains were taken with the education

of his brothers, Arthur was sent, being very young, to a preparatory school in Chelsea, where he learned little, and to which the only references which he was ever known to make were the reverse of flattering. Where this school stood, and who was at the head of it, would have probably remained to the end of time unknown, had not the publication of a former edition of this work attracted the attention of a gentleman, whose father happened to be a fellow-pupil of the great duke at the school in question. He kindly wrote to me on the subject, inclosing a communication from his father, from which I learn that the school in question was kept by a Mr. Brown, that it was not an expensive establishment, and that "Lord Wellesley called upon Arthur Wesley one day, and gave him a shilling." A shilling tip to a schoolboy betokens no superabundance of this world's wealth in the donor, and the donor on the present occasion was Arthur's elder brother.

From the Chelsea school, young Wesley was transferred to Eton, where he remained only long enough to make his way into the remove. He was indifferently instructed when he arrived, and he never by such diligence as the case required succeeded in taking a good place among his class-fellows. His habits, on the contrary, in school and out of school, are stated to have been those of a dreamy, idle, and shy lad. The consequence was, that besides achieving no success as a scholar, he contracted few special intimacies among his contemporaries, and laid the foundation of no lasting friendships. His was indeed a solitary life; a life of solitude in a crowd; for he walked generally alone, often bathed alone, and seldom took part either in the cricket matches or the boat-races which were then, as they are now, in great vogue among Etonians. As was to be expected, after he attained to eminence, attempts were occasionally made to connect these habits with an imagination so busy in devising schemes for the future as to leave the boy neither time nor inclination to live, like other boys, in the present. And in corroboration of this theory, a tradition still survives, that when he took his sons to Eton he showed them a tree, amid the branches of which he had laid out, as upon a map, the whole of his own military career. But this is a mere romance founded upon an entire misconception of the character of the man. It is in direct contradiction likewise to the history of his life, for we have good reason to believe that, had the choice of a profession been left to him, he would not have selected the army. It is therefore simply impossible that visions of military glory

could have filled his mind to the exclusion of other and more pressing subjects, while as yet the career which he might be called upon to run was uncertain, and his own wishes pointed in a direction opposite to that on which in due time he entered.

There seems some reason to believe that Arthur Wesley, though dreamy and reserved, was, as a boy, of rather a combative disposition. He fought at least one battle at Eton, and had for his opponent Robert, better known as Bobus Smith, the elder brother of the witty Canon of St. Paul's. It happened one day that while Smith was bathing in the Thames, young Wesley passed by, and, child-like, threw a small stone or clod at the swimmer. A threat to come ashore and thrash him if the insult were repeated, led, as a matter of course, to its repetition; and Smith, being as good as his word, scrambled up the bank and attacked the culprit. The blow thus received was immediately returned, and a sharp contest ensued, which ended after a few rounds in favour of him who on that occasion had certainly not the right upon his side. But Wesley did not always come off victorious from such encounters.

He was in the habit of spending some of his holidays with his maternal grandfather, Lord Dungannon, at Brynkinalt, in North Wales. Here he managed to establish both a friendship and a feud with a young blacksmith, from whom, though not till both had suffered severe punishment, he received on one occasion a sound thrashing. The victor in that fight, whose name was Hughes, and who died in 1849, at an advanced age, used to tell the story with extreme glee. He was very proud of having beaten the man before whom Napoleon and all his generals went down; and never forgot to end his narrative by observing "that Master Wesley bore him not a pin's worth of ill-will for the beating, but made him his companion in many a wild ramble after the fight, just as he had done before."

On the death of her husband, Lady Mornington removed to London, where she struggled for a while to keep her place in society, upon a jointure which was by no means equal to the strain. The strain became however too great in the end, and she withdrew her son Arthur from Eton, and carrying him to Brussels, took up her abode, in 1784, at the house of a French avocât, named Goubert. There accompanied them to Brussels a youth of about the same age with Arthur, John Armytage by name, the second son of a rich Yorkshire baronet, between whom and Lord Mornington a friendship had subsisted for many years. It was an arrangement which, whether designedly or not,

proved of mutual advantage both to Lady Mornington and John Armytage; for the former received a handsome board with the son of her husband's friend, and the latter enjoyed the prestige of Lady Mornington's protection.

Arthur Wesley and John Armytage thus brought together, pursued their studies in a desultory way under the gentleman at whose house they lodged. They were neither of them much given to hard work, but they mixed in the gaieties of the place, and, if I may judge from Mr. Armytage's MS. Journal, lived with each other on the best terms. "Arthur Wesley," says the document in question, "was extremely fond of music, and played well upon the fiddle, but he never gave indication of any other species of talent. As far as my memory serves, there was no intention then of sending him into the army; his own wishes, if he had any, were in favour of a civilian's life."

Having touched upon the early acquaintance of these two men, it may not be amiss if I show in this place how it went off for a season, and how it came to be renewed. After residing for about a year at Brussels, Lady Mornington returned home, sending her son to the military school at Angers. John Armytage was at the same time appointed to a cornetcy in the Blues, with which regiment he continued to serve till marriage with an heiress enabled him to retire from the army and to settle as a country gentleman in or near Northampton. There he gave himself up to such pursuits as were in those days fashionable among men of his class. He hunted, shot, drove four-in-hand, and patronised the turf, being a regular attendant, among other meets, at Doncaster races. It happened one day in 1827, when he stood upon the grand stand beside the race-course, that a voice which struck him as not unfamiliar, exclaimed, "I'll be d—d if that isn't Jack Armytage." Jack immediately turned round, and found himself face to face with his old companion and fellow-student of other days. There was a cordial grip of hands, followed by questions as to what each had been doing since they parted forty-two years before. "You know pretty well what I've been about," said the duke, "but how have you employed yourself all the while?" "Well, sir," replied Mr. Armytage, "while your grace has been driving Buonaparte and his marshalls up and down, and all over France, Spain, Portugal, and Belgium, I have been driving four-in-hand almost every day from Northampton to Barnet and back again.[1]

[1] He used to meet the mail regularly in its course up and down, and handled the ribbons.

Yours has been the more glorious career of the two, but mine I suspect has not been the least agreeable." The duke laughed, and went on to speak about Louis Goubert their tutor, adding this anecdote: "As I rode into Brussels the day after the battle of Waterloo, I passed the old house, and recognised it, and pulling up, ascertained that the old man was still alive. I sent for him, and recalling myself to his recollection, shook hands with him, and assured him that for old acquaintance' sake he should be protected from all molestation."

Mr. Armytage, who never wearied of describing this little scene, died at Northampton, in 1861, at the advanced age of ninety-two. It does not appear that the duke and he ever met afterwards. They took leave of each other on the grand stand at Doncaster, equally resolved to renew their intimacy elsewhere; but their courses in life lay wide apart, and in politics they differed. How far this latter circumstance may have tended to keep them asunder, must be left to conjecture. All that is certainly known on the subject amounts to this, that their first and last greeting, subsequently to their Brussels' intimacy of 1785, began and ended as has just been described.

I should be glad, if I possessed the requisite information, to give some account of the duke's manner of life while a pupil in the military school at Angers. If any memorials of him were ever established there, the avalanche of the first French Revolution must have swept them all away. But none would appear to have been set up. His early friends, of whom not one now survives, used indeed to say that he made better use of his time at Angers than he had done either at Chelsea or Eton, and he himself stated that he formed some agreeable acquaintances in the neighbourhood, from whom he learned to speak French with the accent and precision of the days of the old monarchy. But here our materials for narrative fail us. We know nothing more than that he pursued his studies at Angers for about a year and a half or two years, and then returned home.

Arthur Wesley entered the army on the 7th of March, 1787, on which day he was appointed to an ensigncy in the 41st regiment of foot. On the 25th of the following December he became a lieutenant. That he was still a shy and awkward lad, in whom the fair sex, in particular, saw nothing to admire, the following anecdote, for the authenticity of which the late Lady Aldborough is responsible, seems to prove. He was at a ball one night, and as usual could not find a partner. Inheriting his father's taste for music, he consoled himself by sitting

down near the band, which happened to be a remarkably good one. By and by the party broke up, when the other officers present were taken home by their lady friends, while young Wesley was by common consent left to travel with the fiddlers. Old Lady Aldborough on one occasion put the duke in mind of the circumstance, after he had become a great man, at which he laughed heartily, while she added with naïveté, "We should not leave you to go home with the fiddlers now."

Mr. Wesley attained the rank of captain on the 30th of June, 1791, and on the 30th of April, 1793, he was appointed to the 33rd regiment of the line as major. His subsequent promotion was rapid, for on the 30th of September he obtained the lieutenant-colonelcy of his regiment. He then fell into the seniority groove, from which, in those days, no one could escape; and spent in consequence half as many years in the rank of lieutenant-colonel as had been required to raise him to that rank from an ensigncy. Colonel in 1796, he became major-general in 1802, and general with local rank in 1811. His last and final step to field-marshal was taken in 1812, under circumstances which shall be more fully detailed when the proper time comes.

Though Mr. Wesley owed his rapid advancement partly to political influence and partly to money, and though it be perfectly true that till he arrived at the command of a regiment no opportunity was afforded him of earning distinction in the field, a very erroneous inference will be drawn if it be assumed that because he had been so successful, he was therefore an ignorant or even a careless regimental officer. The very reverse is the fact. He never neglected a duty, or went through with it as if it were irksome to him. He read a great deal, in a desultory way no doubt, but still to good purpose; and he addicted himself from the outset to a habit which remained with him to the last, that of acquainting himself in all manner of odd ways with everything worthy of notice which passed around him. No exhibition of a new discovery, no display of ingenuity or skill, however absurdly applied, failed to number him among its investigators, and he was not only quick in calculating and drawing inferences, but took special delight in both practices. I have often heard him say that the power of rapid and correct calculation was his forte, and that if circumstances had not made him what he was, he would probably have become distinguished in public life as a financier.

Mr. Wesley still lacked a month or two of completing his

twenty-first year when he took his seat in the Irish House of Commons for the family borough of Trim. He was then a captain of cavalry and aide-de-camp to the lord lieutenant.[1] —a somewhat perilous position for a youth, who, with scarcely any other resources than his military pay, found himself thrown into the very vortex of a court famous for its gaiety and extravagance.

It has been said that then for the first and only time in his long career he became involved in pecuniary difficulties; and stories are told of his being helped out of them by tradesmen, one of whom, a draper named Dillon, paid his bills. I must be permitted to doubt the truth of these stories, which are contradicted not only by the habits of well-ordered economy which distinguished him in after life, but by the whole tone and tenor of his conversation. I have repeatedly heard him discuss the subject of debt, which he denounced as discreditable in the extreme. His expression was, "It makes a slave of a man: I have often known what it was to be in want of money, but I never got into debt." It is not, therefore, very probable, had the Dublin stories been authentic, that the duke with his tenacious memory could have forgotten them. It is impossible to conceive that one so rigidly adherent to truth in small matters as well as in great, would, in this solitary instance, have stepped aside from it.

Of his career as an Irish senator no record has been preserved. He seems to have spoken but rarely, and never at any length. His votes were of course given in support of the party to which he belonged, but otherwise he entered very little into the business of the House. Neither can I discover any traces of intimate or frequent correspondence with members of his own family. One incident, and only one, in his personal history at this period, deserves to be noticed. He became attached to Lady Catherine Pakenham, third daughter of Michael, Earl of Longford, a young lady possessed of great personal charms, and a prodigious favourite at the vice-regal court. The means, however, to support a wife in the style to which the lady had been accustomed, were wanting, and Lord Longford objecting

[1] The duke's first and least scrupulous patron was the Earl of Westmoreland. He was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when Arthur Wesley received his first commission, took the youth at once upon his staff, and heaped promotion upon him. Lord Westmoreland's court was remarkable for the low state of its morality, and the excess of its extravagance. That of Lord Camden, which came next, offered to it in both respects a striking contrast.

to the match, the young people separated, free indeed from all positive engagement, but with a tacit understanding that they would continue true to one another, and wait for better times.

Captain Wesley was thus circumstanced when the British Government determined to afford to Holland, against which the French armies were moving, the military support which England was bound by treaty, in such an emergency, to supply. Anxious to see real service, he wrote to his brother, Lord Mornington, begging him to make interest for a majority in a battalion which was about to be formed out of the flank companies of different regiments of guards. The application was refused, and Captain Wesley continued to act as aide-de-camp in Dublin, till promoted into the 33rd of the line, of which regiment he took command on the 30th of September, as lieutenant-colonel. From that day he devoted all the time which could be spared from his duties in parliament, to improving the discipline of his battalion. He drew up for it a code of standing orders, which have been faithfully preserved ever since. He looked narrowly into its interior economy, which he rendered as perfect as the customs of the British army would then permit, and he had ere long the satisfaction to find that by every general officer who inspected it, the 33rd was pronounced to be the best drilled and most efficient regiment within the limits of the Irish command.

So passed his time till towards the end of May, 1794, when the 33rd received orders to proceed to Cork, and embark for foreign service. Colonel Wesley resigned his seat in the Irish House of Commons, and put himself at the head of his regiment. A small force had already been collected for the purpose of making a descent upon the coast of Brittany; but the misfortunes which about this time overtook the allied armies in the Netherlands, led to a change of plan, and Lord Moira, to whom the command of the expeditionary corps had been entrusted, was directed to proceed with it to the assistance of the Duke of York. With the first division of that corps Colonel Wesley put to sea. He reached Ostend early in June, and Lord Moira arriving, a few days subsequently, with the main body of the troops, preparations were made to open the campaign.

With Lord Moira's successful march from Ostend to Malines I am not concerned. Colonel Wesley took no part in it. He was sent round by water with his own and other battalions to Antwerp:—upon which point not long afterwards the corps of

the Duke of York and of the Prince of Orange fell back. Both had sustained reverses, the former at Oudenarde, the latter at Fleurus; and both were separated from the Austrian army by the issues of the action at Montagne de Fer, near Louvaine. A retreat in opposite directions was thereupon commenced. The Prince of Orange retired with his force towards the Rhine, while the Duke of York marched his own and the Dutch troops upon the Meuse, hoping from his position there to cover Holland.

Never were grosser blunders committed, except by the French Committee of Public Safety, which interfered to prevent Generals Pichegru and Jourdan from taking advantage of the opportunity which these false movements presented. Had the allies known how to make war, they would have concentrated after the affair of Fleurus near Brussels, and thence assumed the offensive. Had the councils of the French been more wisely directed, they would have fallen with all their force upon each retreating corps separately, and destroyed both in detail. The French, however, after wasting two months in inaction, broke up into two corps, and pushed back the allied generals into the positions which they were severally desirous of occupying.

It was the month of July; and in the lines covering Antwerp, Colonel Wesley for the first time found himself in the presence of an enemy. No event of importance occurred, however, till the September following, when the Anglo-Dutch army quitted its position, and took the road to Holland. On the 15th of the same month it was engaged in a serious affair with the right of the republican army. Anxious to interpose between the allies and the Meuse, the French had on the previous evening seized the village of Boxtel, from which the Duke of York directed General Abercrombie, with two battalions of the guards, four of the line, a battery of artillery, and a couple of squadrons of horse, to dislodge them. The English, though they attacked with gallantry, sustained a repulse, and being closely pursued, would have probably been cut to pieces, had not Wesley, with exceeding promptitude, deployed his battalion and checked the pursuers. The village was not retaken, but his judicious move arrested the ardour of the enemy, and the English were enabled to continue their retreat in good order, and without heavy loss.

Colonel Wesley's judgment and coolness attracted that day the notice of General Dundas, who seized the earliest opportunity, after the Duke of York resigned the command, to mark

his sense of the young soldier's merits. In January, 1795, he was placed at the head of a brigade, consisting of three weak battalions, and directed to cover the further retreat of the army. And a service of extreme difficulty, hardship, and suffering it proved to be. Driven from the Meuse across the Wahl, and from the Wahl across the Leck, the English, now separated from the Dutch, fought for existence, amid the depth of a winter unexampled in Europe for severity. The rivers which at other seasons might have interposed some obstacles to the enemy were all frozen over. There was no commissariat; the resources of the open country were exhausted: the more populous towns, imbued with republican opinions, had become decidedly hostile; and fortress after fortress opened its gates, the Dutch garrisons going over to the invaders. Still, whenever the day of battle came, the English did their duty; and again, in an affair near Meterin, between the Wahl and the Leck, Colonel Wesley greatly distinguished himself. But the game was up. On the 2nd of December, 1794, the Duke of York gave over the command to the Hanoverian general, Count Walmoden, and before the end of the following January, Amsterdam, Daventer, Caervorden, Sneppen, and Emden, were one by one evacuated. Nothing now remained except to embark the wreck of the army as soon as the breaking up of the frost would allow. And this, without the necessity of submitting to the disgrace of a capitulation, was at length effected.

Short and disastrous as his first campaign had been, it proved of unspeakable advantage to Colonel Wesley. If he found nothing to admire in the general management of affairs, the countless blunders which day by day were committed conveyed to him lessons and warnings which he neither overlooked nor forgot. There was divided command without talent enough anywhere to lessen the inconveniences inseparable from it. There was total absence of forethought, of arrangement, of system. There were national jealousies and heartburnings innumerable. Sometimes one day, sometimes two, would elapse without a morsel of food being issued to the soldiers. The sick were left to recover or die, as the strength or weakness of their constitution might determine. Indeed the very wounded themselves received scarcely any attention. Shoes wore out, and were not replaced, though it was necessary to perform long marches amid melted snow and over frozen ground; and as to time, no man, high or low, seemed to take

the smallest account of it. "You can't conceive such a state of things," the duke used to say long years afterwards. "If we happened to be at dinner and the wine was going round, it was considered wrong to interrupt us. I have seen a packet handed in from the Austrian headquarters, and thrown aside unopened, with a remark, That will keep till to-morrow morning. It has always been a marvel to me how any one of us escaped."

CHAPTER II

AT HOME—IN INDIA—FALL OF SERINGAPATAM

Colonel Wesley landed at Harwich from the Low Countries in the early spring of 1795. He conducted his regiment to Warley in Essex, where an encampment had been formed, and leaving it there, proceeded on a short visit to Ireland. He seems to have laboured at this time under considerable depression of spirits, and for some reason or another had become disgusted with his profession. This we learn from a letter addressed by him to Lord Camden, in which he asks that nobleman, then at the head of the Irish Government, to find for him a situation either in the Board of Revenue or in the Treasury. But though he describes himself as acting on the occasion under the advice of Lord Mornington, the application met with no success. Some other candidate, probably supported by stronger political influence, obtained the prize; and Wesley was left to carve out for himself with his sword a name second to none in the military annals of his country.

Colonel Wesley had enjoyed but a few months' repose, when he was directed to join an expedition fitted out for the reduction of the French settlements in the West Indies. He embarked in Admiral Christian's fleet, which a succession of heavy gales dispersed in the Channel, the transports allotted to convey him and his regiment being driven back to Spithead. So ended that enterprise. The regiment disembarked again and proceeded to Poole. But there was a call for its services elsewhere, and in the course of a few months it embarked for India. Colonel Wesley was suffering at the time under a sharp attack of illness which confined him to his chamber; he was unable therefore to accompany the regiment. But taking a passage in a fast-sailing frigate, he overtook the fleet still at anchor in Table Bay, and on the 17th of February, 1797, entered Fort William, at the head of his corps.

The condition of British India, in 1797, was different in every respect from British India in 1864. At the former of these periods its right to be spoken of as an empire had indeed been

established, but it was an empire made up of detached fragments, the largest of which comprised a population of perhaps thirty millions, the smallest of not more than half a million at the most. There were then, as there are now, three Presidencies,—Bengal, Madras, and Bombay. Bengal included the fertile provinces of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa. The authority of Madras was recognised over a comparatively insignificant portion of the Carnatic; while Bombay gave the law only to the town and harbour of that name, and to a narrow strip of land running along the shores of the adjacent continent. Interspersed among these Presidencies and to a great extent surrounding them, were many native states; Nepal, the country of the Seiks, the kingdom of Oude, the Mahratta principalities, including those of Holkar, Scindia, and the Peishwa; the Deccan, of which the Nizam was at the head; Bundelcund, Nagpore, Cuttack, Mysore, and Travancore. All these, originally portions of the great Mahometan Empire, or else, like the Mahrattas and the Seiks, tributaries to the Mogul, had in the course of the previous century and a half thrown off their allegiance, and, some without foreign aid, others with such assistance as the English and French factories could supply, succeeded in establishing their independence. During the progress of the wars which led to these results both English and French were constrained to assume a new attitude in the country. Instead of traders, they became soldiers, and fought first for existence, and by and by for empire. They invariably took opposite sides in the native quarrels, and in due time stood forward as principals instead of accessories. After a lengthened struggle the balance of fortune turned in favour of the English. They defeated their rivals at all points, placed their own candidates on vacant thrones, obtained from each fresh accessions to their territory, and ended in becoming, if not the paramount, at all events a leading power in India. And all this in defiance of constant prohibitions from home and asseverations from abroad, continually repeated, that their single object was to conquer a peace which should prove at once honourable and lasting.

The amount of physical force employed to achieve these great ends cannot now be thought of except with astonishment. A few hundred Englishmen were all that applied their hands to lay the foundations of the company's empire in the East; and very few thousands, not more than three or four at the most, brought the work to a completion. They did so indeed by communicating to natives their own discipline, and in part at

least their own spirit—and these they found, under their own guidance, equal to every emergency. But not the less true is it, that to effect so large a purpose, qualities were needed, and called into existence, such as are rarely to be met with in any other than the Anglo-Saxon race. From the chief of a factory to the private soldier who stood sentry at his gate, every Englishman in India accepted it as a principle that great things were expected of him: and very few indeed, when the hour of difficulty arrived, disappointed the expectation. The consequence was that India became, what Mr. Canning on a memorable occasion pronounced it to be, "a country fertile in heroes and statesmen." For every particular lad, whether he came as a writer or as a cadet, stepped at once on his arrival into a position more or less of responsibility, and knowing that he had only his own energies to depend upon, he brought them to bear at once, and either failed entirely or triumphed.

I am far from supposing that wherever Colonel Wellesley (for about this time the spelling of the name was changed) had been called upon to serve, his mind would not have awakened sooner or later from the half-lethargic state in which throughout his earlier years it may be said to have lain. He was already known in the army as an excellent regimental officer, and needed only a fair field to show that he was capable of higher things. But India, circumstanced as it then was, undoubtedly presented to him opportunities for which he might have vainly sought in any other part of the world. The best proof of this lies in the fact, that from the day of his arrival at Calcutta a complete change took place in the moral and intellectual nature of the man. The habits of quiet observation to which he had heretofore been addicted expanded suddenly into reasoning. The experience of war and its requirements which he had accumulated in the Netherlands seemed to act upon him with the force of inspiration, and his correspondence, happily preserved, becomes in consequence instructive as well as interesting in the highest degree. He had not been two months in the country before he was consulted by the government on everything connected with the equipment and administration of the army. He was chosen within three months to command a force, which Sir John Shore proposed to employ in the reduction of Manilla; a charge which, with rare generosity, he refused to accept till satisfied that the feelings of a meritorious officer, senior to himself, had suffered no outrage. The enterprise came to nothing, because, while the troops were still on their way, the governor-general changed

his mind. But the pains which Colonel Wellesley took to provide all things necessary to ensure success, and the care which he bestowed upon the health and comfort of his men, showed that already he understood the importance of attending to matters of detail, the neglect of which, almost more than disasters in the field, renders armies inefficient. Nor was it only in his own department properly so called that he took at once and for ever the start of his contemporaries. The political relations of the company with the surrounding states, the character of the people over whom their dominion was established, the position which the empire must assume in India, if it was to become permanent and prosperous,—all these demanded his attention, and he mastered them. His letters consequently exhibit a wonderful perception of the true state of things as they then existed, and a clear understanding of the dangers which threatened. Nor was he content to study India from one point alone. He visited his old friend Lord Hobart, still Governor of Madras, though on the eve of making way for Lord Clive, and made himself master of the system which prevailed there, and of which he certainly does not speak in laudatory terms. The results of his experience in all these matters he communicated to Lord Mornington, on whom the office of governor-general had been pressed, urging him at the same time not to reject the proffered dignity. "I strongly advise you," writes Colonel Wellesley, "to come out. I am convinced that you will retain your health, nay, it is possible that its general state may be improved, and you will have the fairest opportunity of rendering material services to the public and of doing yourself credit." Colonel Wellesley's arguments prevailed, and on the 17th day of May, 1797, the brothers had the happiness to meet and embrace in the Government house at Calcutta.

It would be an old story, often told before, were I in this place to tell how Lord Mornington found himself driven to reverse the policy on which his immediate predecessors had acted. A too manifest determination to keep at peace is attributed by Orientals to weakness. And economy in the management of national affairs leads, when carried beyond wise limits, to extravagance. British India, when Lord Mornington assumed the management of its policy, was in imminent danger both from without and from within. Within, the army had melted away for lack of recruitment; the arsenals were void and the treasury empty. Without, the native governments,

would have worked better than it does now. But that does not affect my argument, that the failure of Pitt's plan was a great misfortune. We had the pope with us and against the French Republic in 1800; and the Irish priests were mostly of the old school. If the state had paid them, they would have been true to the state, I believe; for they got little out of the people, and had nothing to expect but extirpation from the French. However I am arguing according to supposition only, and may be mistaken."

"Did you approve then of the exercise by the crown of a veto on all ecclesiastical appointments made by the pope."

"I did not think much about it in those days. The Romish party themselves proposed it, perhaps because they knew it would be rejected. My duty was to obey, and to see that others obeyed the laws. It rested with the government and the legislature to change or to retain them. But this I did think then, and think now, that government ought to do what is just towards the governed, let the consequences be what they may."

Sir Arthur was thus employed when an event occurred in his family which could not fail to interest him deeply; I allude to the birth of his eldest son. For on the 10th of April, 1806, he had married the same Lady Catherine Pakenham, to whom when a captain of cavalry he became attached, and on the 7th of February, 1807, she presented him with his first-born. We know that in the latter years of his life the duke's fondness for children was great. There is every reason to believe that this amiable feeling was quite as strong in youth, and we need not therefore draw unfairly upon the imagination if we assume that he hailed the birth of this child with all a father's tenderness. Be this however as it may, the state of Europe was then such as to leave him little leisure for the indulgence of domestic sympathies. Before the boy was five months old, duty called him again into the field, under circumstances which are better understood now than they seem to have been both here and on the continent a few years ago.

The treaty of Tilsit, which brought the war between France and Russia to a close, included certain secret articles, according to which the rulers of the two states were to divide Europe between them. To Alexander of Russia the empire of the East was to be given, the empire of the West was to fall to the share of Napoleon. One obstacle alone presented itself to the accomplishment of that purpose; England ruled the waves, and till she should be reduced to a state of helplessness, all other

combinations must fail. It was accordingly settled that towards the subjugation of England, France and Russia should put out their whole strength, and that the other powers, and especially the naval powers, should be constrained to co-operate with them. Now there were three of these powers, and only three, Denmark, Sweden, and Portugal, which maintained at that time friendly relations with England; and these, it was settled, should be required, by force or fraud, not only to close their ports against English commerce, but to employ their fleets in covering a great enterprise for the invasion of England itself.

It happened that there was assembled at Sheerness and other harbours along the east coast, a large fleet and a considerable army, with which it had been intended to support Russia and Prussia, while yet at war with France. Delays occurred however in the departure of the expedition which defeated its purpose; and now the government determined to employ this force upon an enterprise which nothing short of the necessity of the case could justify. The Danish fleet was a powerful one, Danish seamen are excellent, it was essential to the very existence of England that these should be prevented from passing into the service of France. But there was only one mode by which that danger could be averted, viz. by prevailing upon Denmark to transfer her ships to Great Britain, on the distinct understanding that they should be restored to her in an efficient state, as soon as hostilities between England and France came to an end. To make this proposal, however, without having at hand the means of enforcing compliance, was felt to be useless. So the troops received orders to embark, and the fleet to prepare for sea, only a few persons, of whom Sir Arthur Wellesley was one, being made acquainted with the destination of the armament.

Sir Arthur no sooner became aware of what was in progress, than he applied to be appointed to a command. His application was not well received by the government. They had found him eminently useful as a civil administrator, and urged him to abide at his post. This to a man not rich was a strong temptation, for the salary of the Chief Secretary of Ireland amounted in those days to £8000 a year. But neither the reasonings of his colleagues nor the suggestions of prudence diverted Sir Arthur from his purpose. "As I am determined," he wrote to Lord Castlereagh on the 7th of June, "not to give up the military profession, and as I know that I can be of no service in it unless I have the confidence and esteem of the

officers and soldiers of the army, I must shape my course in such a manner as to avoid the imputation of preferring lucrative civil employment to active service in the field." In the same spirit, and about the same time, he expressed himself to the Duke of Richmond. "I accepted my office in Ireland solely on the condition that it should not preclude me from such service when an opportunity should offer; and I am convinced that though you may feel some inconvenience from my temporary absence, supposing that it is intended I should return to you, or from the loss of the assistance of an old friend, supposing that it is not, you would be the last man to desire or to wish that I should do anything with which I should not be satisfied myself; and I acknowledge that I should not be satisfied if I allowed any opportunity of service to pass by without offering myself."

There was no resisting such arguments as these; and the government gave way: but they yielded only on one condition, —that Sir Arthur should retain his chief-secretaryship, a substitute discharging the duties of the office during his absence; and that on his return, should he be able to return within three months, he would put himself once more in harness. Well pleased to carry his point on any terms, Sir Arthur could not possibly object to these; so he handed over his office with its details to the gentleman appointed to receive it, and quitted Dublin for a season.

It is the province of history to tell how and with what measure of success the Copenhagen expedition was conducted. The plan of operations appears not to have quite satisfied Sir Arthur Wellesley, who was anxious to save the Danish capital from the horrors of a bombardment. His proposal however to starve out the island, by cutting off its communications with the mainland, was rejected; and the troops disembarking, the siege began. While the rest of the army was so employed, Sir Arthur, with the division of which he was at the head, moved into the interior; and on the 29th of August, engaged and defeated a considerable force near the little town of Keoge. Fifteen hundred prisoners and ten pieces of cannon were the fruits of this victory, which effectually hindered the population from rising, and placed the whole island at the mercy of the invaders. And rigidly and strictly was discipline preserved by them. Wherever he went Sir Arthur placed guards over the houses; and hindered, as far as it was possible so to do, all plunder and brigandage. Once, and only once, marauders got the start of him; but the misfortune served only the more to

bring his noble qualities into light. "Upon my march from Keoge," he wrote to the Countess of Holstein, "towards this part of the country, I heard with the greatest concern that a detachment of British troops, which had pursued the enemy on the side of Valve Slot Rye, had committed excesses in the convent, from which your Royal Highness and your servants had suffered. I cannot sufficiently express my concern at the occurrence of this event, respecting which I find that your servants had already had some communication with the officers of the regiment to which the men belong who have been guilty of these excesses. The zealous desire of these officers to remove the disgrace which these offences have brought upon their regiment has anticipated my wishes, and they last night sent me all the articles which had been taken from your Highness's servants, of which they gave the officers a list. I now send those articles, and entreat your Highness to pardon those excesses, in consideration of the ignorance of the soldiers that your Highness resided at Valve Slot Rye, and of the circumstances by which they were produced. Those soldiers were engaged in the pursuit of a defeated enemy, who made some attempt to rally, and fired from the houses and buildings in your Highness's neighbourhood."

We are not surprised to find an officer, who, at the head of an invading force, could thus act, receiving from people of the country such communications as the following:—

"THULLARGSHOLM, *4th Sept.*, 1807.

"SIR,—It is an obligation to me to thank you, most sincerely and of my heart, for the protection you have given me in these days your troops have laid in my neighbourhood. I can never forget it; I shall still remember it; and I beg you most humbly that you never will withdraw me this protection so long your troops are staying here; it will still be a comfort to me and family, in letting us live in rest and security. I cannot finish this without giving the best testimony to the people that you have given me to guard. They have always behaved there as people belonging to a great and generous nation.—Most humbly, etc.,

"TÖNNEGEN."

The Countess of Holstein writes still more gratefully:

"LETHROBOURG, *Sept. 5th*, 1807.

"In presenting to Mons. le Chevalier de Wellesley my

acknowledgments I take the liberty of offering some fruit, only regretting that it is not more worthy of his acceptance.

"A Lieutenant Rila, of the dragoons, has just arrived in search of the Chevalier, that he might pray him to set at liberty certain prisoners. Not finding his Excellency here, he has charged me to become a suitor for these unfortunate men in his room; and I send their names in the hope that, looking to the noble and benevolent character of the Chevalier de Wellesley, I shall not ask in vain. With sentiments of the most distinguished regard, I subscribe myself

"S. C. E. Comtesse de Holstein."

CHAPTER V

RETURN TO CIVIL EMPLOYMENT—BEGINNING OF THE PENINSULAR WAR

Such was Major-general Sir Arthur Wellesley commanding a division in Lord Cathcart's army; the same strict disciplinarian as when warring on his own account in the Carnatic, the same that we afterwards find him when freeing the nations of the Peninsula, pursuing the invaders into their own country, and marching upon Paris. Wherever his influence extended, the troops were under rigid control. Stubborn and resolute in the day of battle, they were gentle in their bearing towards the peaceful inhabitants, who not unfrequently came to them for protection against the outrages of stragglers from their own armies. It will be long before Denmark can forget, she has by this time, I doubt not, forgiven, the wrong which a stern necessity compelled England to put upon her. But as often as, in her history, the proceedings of 1807 are referred to, the name of Arthur Wellesley will be mentioned, not only with respect, as that of a gallant and successful soldier, but with gratitude and veneration, because he was a just and generous man.

One of the last acts of Sir Arthur in this brief campaign was to obtain leave for the prisoners whom he had taken at the battle of Keoge to return on parole to their own homes. He waited after this to conduct the negotiations for the surrender of the fleet, and then lamenting the outrages that followed, the destruction of the dockyards and the burning down of a considerable portion of the city, he took his passage in the frigate which carried the despatches, and returned home.

He reached London on the 10th of September, and resumed at once, from his house in Harley Street, the duties of Chief Secretary for Ireland. Among his letters I find one addressed, on the 1st of October, to the Duke of Richmond, in which reasons are assigned why the city and county of Limerick should not be brought under the operation of the Insurrection Act; and on the 14th he is in Dublin, deep in Irish affairs. Indeed it is impossible to discover from what he has left on record,

that during these three months of active warfare his thoughts were ever diverted for a moment from the channel of civil administration. But so it was with him under all circumstances. There never lived a man who more entirely than he possessed the faculty of abstracting his attention from one subject and applying it to another. Indeed it seemed as if in that capacious mind there were room enough for any number of arguments at the same time, each of which, as occasion required, could be brought forward, or thrust into the background, without sustaining by the process any damage in logical distinctness.

Among other matters referred to him for consideration at this time was a project entertained by the cabinet of avenging the disaster of Buenos Ayres by the conquest of Spanish America. As was his custom on all important occasions, he handled the subject in elaborate minutes, of which not fewer than fourteen remain among his papers. The first is dated in November, 1806, the last in June, 1808. They are very remarkable documents, evincing not only a thorough knowledge of the art of war, but showing that before he began to write, he had mastered the geography of the proposed seat of operations, and was thoroughly acquainted with its resources, civil as well as military. Had his plans been carried into effect, there is no telling what changes might have been brought about in the condition of the new world. But before any decided steps could be taken in that direction, a wider field of enterprise presented itself on which he entered, and out of which he came, as a politician and a military commander, the foremost man in Europe.

The story has been elsewhere told at length of the outrages and wrongs which drove the Spanish and Portuguese people into a war of extermination with France. I am not going to repeat that story now, my purpose being sufficiently served when I state, that just as the preparations of the British Government were complete, and the South American expedition was about to sail, tidings arrived from the Peninsula which caused an immediate abandonment of the enterprise. One French army had traversed the districts which lie between the Bidassoa and the Douro, and was marching upon Lisbon. Another, after occupying Madrid, and removing Charles VI. and his family to Bayonne, had proclaimed Joseph Buonaparte King of Spain. Spaniards and Portuguese, but particularly Spaniards, ran everywhere to arms, in order to vindicate the honour of their country, and England was invited by delegates from various provinces to help the people in the contest in which they had

embarked. It has been said that so long before as 1805, when the capitulation of Ulm was communicated to him, Mr. Pitt, entertaining at Walmer Castle a party of statesmen and military officers, of whom Sir Arthur Wellesley was one, foretold this outbreak. "Our last hope of resistance to Buonaparte is gone," exclaimed one of the guests. "By no means," was Pitt's reply, "we shall have another European coalition against him before long, and Spain will take the lead in it." Then observing that the remark fell dead upon those around him, he went on to say, "I tell you that Spain is the first continental nation which will involve him in a war of partisans. Her nobles are debased and her government wretched, but the people still retain their sense of honour and their sobriety. Buonaparte will endeavour to tread out these feelings, because they are incompatible with his designs, and I look to that attempt for kindling the sort of war which will not cease till he is destroyed."

Whether this prediction was really uttered or not, the case fell out exactly as here described. It was not the Spanish Government which opposed itself to France, nor the high spirit of the Spanish nobles which supplied the place of a government. The Spanish people rose of their own accord, finding leaders where they could, and rushed into that war of partisans for which the nature of their country eminently fitted them. The Portuguese followed the example, and both appealed to England for support. The appeal was not made in vain. Every Spaniard and Portuguese, who presented himself as an emissary of the revolt, was well received by the English Government; and arms, ammunition, clothing, and even money, were lavished upon men, of whom very many took care that these good things should not pass out of their hands again except with profit to themselves. Nor was this heedless extravagance considered to be unwise either in or out of the British Parliament. The spectacle of a nation rising in its might took captive the imaginations of all classes of Englishmen. Whatever the minister proposed in aid of the Spanish malcontents, was assented to with acclamation. Indeed, the Duke of Portland and his colleagues were found fault with only because they did not go as far as the nation desired in sustaining a cause so glorious.

The condition of Portugal at this moment, though bad enough, was probably considered by the mere politician to be less desperate than that of Spain. The king, before he emigrated with his family to Brazil, had provided for the administration of affairs during his absence. Certain grandees of the kingdom,

including Count Souza and the Bishop of Oporto, were appointed regents, and every act performed by the regency was to be regarded as emanating from the crown. No provision of the sort was made or could be made in Spain. It was only after he reached Bayonne that Ferdinand VII. became aware of the destiny which awaited him; and the formal deed of abdication which he executed there, transferred to Joseph Buonaparte whatever right of government the retiring monarch could convey. When Spain rose therefore against the intruder, she rose against the only government then in existence; and her people accepted, what indeed came alone within their reach, the sway of such persons as by social position or energy of character seemed justified in taking the lead in a great emergency.

Spain was, in former times, a constitutional country. Each province had its Junta or deliberative body, elected like the members of our own House of Commons, to represent the people in parliament. When the Bourbons came, they set aside these ancient usages, and now nothing but the tradition of them remained. Tradition however, in such a crisis, is of inestimable value, and the absence of a court was atoned for, as if instinctively, by calling into operation these dormant legislative bodies. Juntas arose, no one could tell how, in every province. Arragon, Castile, Catalonia, Estremadura, Galicia, Andalusia, each had its own, which issued decrees in full assurance that they would be respected and obeyed by all, except the adherents of the usurper. It was with these Juntas that the English Government communicated in Spain, as they did with the regency in Portugal. And till a closer experience proved how little they could be trusted, the English Government reposed in their wisdom and patriotism unbounded confidence.

The force intended for the conquest of Spanish America was assembled at this time in Cork. The ships were in the harbour ready to receive the men, and Sir Arthur Wellesley was nominated to the command. But so novel an aspect of affairs in Europe induced the government to pause before proceeding further with the enterprise; and Sir Arthur was invited to come over, and give them the benefit of his advice. When he arrived in London, he found the ministers undecided whether it would be judicious to land a British soldier in the Peninsula at all. They had been assured by the representatives of the Spanish Juntas that Spain stood in no need of men; that there were Spaniards enough, provided arms and ammunition were supplied them, to drive the invaders beyond the Pyrenees.

This was a comfortable doctrine, to which the cabinet lent a willing ear, but Sir Arthur protested against it. He spoke from his own experience in India of the hopelessness of opposing undisciplined levies to regular troops, and so far prevailed, that it was settled to attempt with the corps already collected in Ireland, a diversion in favour of the Peninsular patriots. It was impossible to avoid offering the command of that corps to Sir Arthur, but the offer was clogged with conditions, which rendered the acceptance inconvenient if not disagreeable. They insisted on retaining his services in Ireland, and that he should again discharge the duties of his office by deputy. That they intended and desired him to refuse the command, there can be little doubt; but he was too much in earnest to be deterred by trifles. In less than four-and-twenty hours the whole was settled.

It was during this visit to London that the *tête-à-tête* conversation occurred, between Sir Arthur and Mr. John Wilson Croker, of which the latter gives an account in the *Quarterly Review*. They had become acquainted in Dublin, where Mr. Croker's talents and success at the bar won for him admittance into the best society; and there the foundations were laid of an intimacy which ceased only on Mr. Croker's death. Sir Arthur had invited him to dine in Harley Street. He was the only guest, and after the ladies had withdrawn, Mr. Croker observing that his host was silent, asked him what he was thinking about. Sir Arthur replied, "To tell you the truth, I was thinking of the French whom I am going to fight. I have never seen them since the campaign in Flanders, when they were already capital soldiers, and a dozen years of successes must have made them still better; they have beaten all the world, and are supposed to be invincible. They have besides, it seems, a new system, which has out-manœuvred and overwhelmed all the armies of Europe; but no matter, my die is cast. They may overwhelm, but I don't think they will out-manœuvre me. In the first place, I am not afraid of them, as everybody else seems to be; and, secondly, if what I hear of their system of manœuvring be true, I think it a false one against troops steady enough, as I hope mine are, to receive them with the bayonet. I suspect that half the continental armies were more than half beaten before the battle began. I, at least, will not be frightened beforehand."

I have no doubt whatever that this reported conversation is substantially correct. I suspect, however, that Mr. Croker's

memory was a little at fault in regard to details, for the phraseology is not the duke's, and the inferences to which it leads would be unsound. The duke knew better than most men that the only difference then between French and English tactics was this, that whereas the French attacked in column, the English always attacked in line; and that the real resistance to an attack by troops waiting for their adversaries in line comes from the volume of fire with which the column is received. All armies, French as well as English, Russian, German, and Italian, defend a position in line, provided the assailants give them time to deploy. But the English alone have hitherto attacked in line, though I believe that the armies of other nations are beginning in this respect to follow their example. The flourish about receiving the French with the bayonet, and the steadiness required to do so, was not, I will venture to say, Sir Arthur Wellesley's, but Mr. Croker's flourish.

Having settled his business in London, and received his final letter of instructions, Sir Arthur Wellesley set off for Cork, where his small and ill-appointed corps had already been embarked. It consisted on paper of 1016 officers and non-commissioned officers, 229 drummers and trumpeters, 9505 rank and file, and 215 troop horses. There were twelve pieces of cannon attached to that corps, not one of them horsed. The cavalry, effective and non-effective, counted only 346 sabres, and one officer of engineers with eleven artificers made up the sum of trained workmen at the general's disposal. The staff which attended him consisted of high-spirited young gentlemen not one of whom had any experience of war; he had neither a commissariat nor a medical establishment to trust to; and a veteran battalion, while it seemed to swell his numbers, served rather to weaken than to strengthen his hands. Hence, after making necessary deductions, he found that the utmost force which he could hope to bring into line would hardly exceed 8000 men. "It certainly was a shabby enough start," he used to say in after years, "but it was quite of a piece with our military policy at the time. The government trusted me, I believe, as much as it trusted anybody, but it had no great faith even in me, as yet, and dreaded nothing so much as throwing a large army ashore on the continent under the command of a British officer. I must admit, however, that the men were admirable, and admirably drilled. All that they wanted was experience, and that they got by degrees."

Having seen his troops on board, and fixed a rendezvous with

the commodore, Sir Arthur Wellesley, leaving the fleet behind, set off in the *Crocodile* frigate for Corunna. He had been desired to communicate with the Junta of Galicia under the persuasion that the French had already sustained a defeat, and that little more was necessary to insure the independence of Spain than that the passes of the Pyrenees should be occupied. But on his arrival at Corunna he found that, with vast enthusiasm of speech, there was no vigour of action in the ruling body. His proffered assistance in men was declined; so after landing stores and money for the use of the patriots, he put to sea again. He rejoined the fleet at Cape Finisterre, where he held a brief conference with the admiral, Sir Pulteney Malcolm, after which he again took the lead, and found in Mondego Bay, on the coast of Portugal, what appeared to him a convenient place of disembarkation.

The British Government, when it sent out this handful of men from Cork, had formed no specific plans of its own; it could not therefore give to the leader of the expedition any specific instructions. But certain contingencies were assumed as of possible occurrence, and certain eventualities coincident with these contingencies were suggested. Beyond this the cabinet had not ventured to go, and Sir Arthur felt on quitting Cape Finisterre that he possessed, what above all things he most desired, entire liberty of action.

The *Crocodile's* anchor was scarcely over the side in Mondego Bay ere this pleasant delusion vanished. Fresh letters of instruction greeted him, wherein he was informed that his Majesty's government had enlarged its views, and that the force under his command was to be considered as the mere advanced guard of a larger army. From various quarters, from Gibraltar, from Sweden, from England, fresh troops were coming, which, when united, would make up 30,000 men. In this army Sir Arthur Wellesley was to serve as the junior of six generals of division. Lieutenant-General Sir Hugh Dalrymple, Governor of Gibraltar, was to command in chief. Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burrard was to be second in comand; and Lieutenants-General Sir John Moore, the Hon. Alexander Hope, Mackenzie Fraser, and Lord Paget, were all, in command of their respective divisions, to take precedence of Sir Arthur Wellesley. It is not to be supposed that such a communication could be at all agreeable to him who was the object of it. He took it, however, with perfect good humour, as he took every announcement of the will of the government which he served;

and would not allow it to interfere with the arrangements which he had already made. "All that I can say on the subject," he wrote in reply to Lord Castlereagh, "is that whether I am to command the army or not, or even to quit it, I shall do my best to insure success, and you may depend upon it, I shall not hurry the operations, or commence them one moment sooner than they ought to be commenced, in order that I may acquire the credit of success."

Among other contingencies touched upon in the original letter of instructions, was a campaign in Portugal, of which the river Tagus might be the base. It was essential in his opinion to the success of that campaign, that as soon as possible a landing should be effected, and he waited only the coming in of the fleet to commence that operation. The fleet arrived on the last day of July, and the disembarkation began on the 1st of August. But the means of effecting that difficult purpose were most inadequate, and a succession of heavy gales had left such a surf upon the shore, that the ordinary ship's boats ran great risk of being staved, as one by one they plunged into it. Five days were thus consumed in doing that which, had proper equipments been provided, ought to have been done in one. But the evil was in a great degree compensated by the unexpected arrival, on the 6th, of General Spencer, with a reinforcement of three or four thousand men. On the 7th, therefore, when he passed his army in review, Sir Arthur found that 12,000 excellent infantry were at his disposal, and that his cavalry and artillery, though few in number, were, in all that affected the equipment and physique of the men, excellent.

An army, to be effective, must, however, consist of more than men. Horses are needed to drag guns; mules or waggons to transport stores; cattle to supply fresh meat; and means of transport for tents and necessary baggage. All these Sir Arthur Wellesley found himself obliged to procure through the instrumentality of a staff to which work of this kind was entirely new. He had, indeed, on his passage to Mondego called at Oporto, and arranged there with the bishop for a small supply of what was most urgently needed. But he learned at the same time that effective co-operation from the Portuguese themselves was out of the question. Of regular troops there were said to be about 8000, under General don Bernardo Frere, at Lyria. Bands of peasants, the bishop stated, were gathering round that nucleus; but "the peasants," Sir Arthur writes in a letter to Lord Castlereagh, "have, I believe, no arms, but pikes, and

those called regular infantry are composed of individuals belonging to the different corps of the Portuguese army." From a force so constituted, little support could be expected, and little was given. General Frere, after a good deal of consultation and discussion, lent Sir Arthur 1400 of this infantry and 250 of his cavalry, and stood apart with the residue to protect, as he stated, the communications of the English with the coast, after their advance should have begun.

There were at this time, it was calculated, about 20,000 French troops in Portugal. In point of fact, there were many more, because the embarkation returns made out some weeks subsequently, showed that upwards of 26,000 had survived the casualties of the campaign. Of these, five or six thousand were in Alentejo, under General Loison. Five thousand more, under General De la Borde watched the English from the hills of Cintra; and the rest, after affording garrisons to Almeida and to the forts upon the Tagus, were with Junot himself in Lisbon. It was the obvious policy of the English general to strike at the nearest of these corps, before it could be joined by the rest: it was equally the policy of General De la Borde to avoid an action, keeping the invaders at the same time in check. The former sought to gain his end by marching along the coast, instead of advancing, as he was expected to do, direct upon Cintra; the latter, who was moving upon Lyria, intending to form a junction there with Loison, found himself thwarted, and halted at Roliça. These events occurred during the 9th and 10th, for the morning of the 9th had dawned before Sir Arthur was in a condition to quit his bivouac; and at two places, called Alcobaça and Obidos, the advanced sentries of the hostile armies came for the first time in view. The French felt that they were not strong enough to hold both posts; they retired, therefore, in the night between the 13th and 14th from Alcobaça, and on the 15th made their first acquaintance with the ring of English rifles. Two companies from the 95th Rifle Brigade and the 60th were directed to dislodge the enemy from Obidos, and the following are the terms in which Sir Arthur describes the manner in which they did their work. "We had yesterday," his letter is dated the 16th, "a little affair of advanced posts, brought on by the over-eagerness of the riflemen in pursuit of an enemy's picquet, in which we lost Lieutenant Bunbury of the 95th killed, and Pakenham slightly wounded; and some men of the 95th and 60th. The troops behaved remarkably well, but not with great prudence."

CHAPTER VI

ROLIÇA AND VIMEIRO—RETURNS HOME

The ring of English rifles and French musketry, in and about Obidos, will long be remembered as the opening of a stern drama which occupied the attention of Europe unintermittingly during six long years. There followed on the 17th the battle of Roliça, which, considered with reference to the numbers engaged, deserves to be spoken of as a mere affair; but which, because of the obstinate valour displayed on both sides, and the moral effect produced by it, holds a conspicuous place in the history of the war in the Peninsula. General De la Borde occupied on that occasion an elevated plateau, of which the conformation was such that it could be turned only by a circuitous march, while its approaches in front were through two steep and narrow defiles. He held it with 5000 infantry, 500 cavalry, and 5 guns, and was attacked by 13,700 infantry, 650 cavalry, and 12 guns. De la Borde fought for two objects; first, in the hope that before the English could dislodge him, General Loison, of whose approach he was aware, would come up; and next, failing that contingency, in the confident expectation that, after inflicting severe loss upon the assailants, he should himself be able to get away comparatively unharmed. There is no rule in the art of war which condemned these expectations, yet they came to nothing. Sir Arthur set aside the first by attacking in front, instead of waiting for the completion of his flank movements; and he dissipated the last by the vigour with which the attack was pushed. Though unable to bring more than 4000 infantry at a time into action, he carried all before him. The French offered a stout resistance; they had been taught to despise the English as soldiers, and waited for them till the bayonets well-nigh crossed. But in spite of their bravery and the skill of their leader, who, wounded early in the day, never quitted his saddle, they were driven from one alignment after another, and finally retreated under cover of their cavalry, leaving 600 killed and wounded, and three of their guns, upon the field.

Of the Englishmen who took part in the battle of Roliça few

now survive, and these saw, in after years, many a sterner encounter; yet the impression made upon them by what passed on that memorable 17th of August never grew faint. It is as vivid at the moment of my writing, as when the shouts of the combatants rang more than half a century ago in their ears. This is not to be wondered at. Putting aside the Brigadier and a few other officers of rank, not a man in that little army had ever before come under fire; while all, without exception, witnessed then, for the first time, how their chief bore himself in the hour of danger. He is described by such as had the best means of observation, to have been calm, self-possessed, and cheerful throughout. The 16th was devoted to such preparations as the eve of a battle required. He personally reconnoitred the enemy's position; personally explained to each leader of a column what he was expected to do; showed the points on which they were all severally to move, and satisfied himself that his orders were understood. He dined at his usual hour, and chatted with the gentlemen of his staff, and the guests invited to meet them, as if nothing extraordinary were going to happen; and when the morrow came he was early in the saddle, shaved and dressed with the utmost regard to neatness. And here I may as well observe in passing that such was his unvarying custom. At whatever hour he rose, however the coming day was to be spent, he allowed nothing to interfere with this minute attention to his toilet, which, free from the most distant approach to foppishness, early got for him the sobriquet of the *Beau*. His greetings to all who encountered him, as he rode along the line, were kindly and cheerful. He spoke a few words to Fergusson and Bowes, who commanded the columns appointed to turn the enemy's right and left, and again pointed out the exact spots, on reaching which they were to change their line of march. This done he waited till they were seen to make the turn, and then his skirmishers ran out. While these drove in the French pickets, he himself rode behind the supports, and by and by, when the proper moment came, said in a quiet tone to one of his staff, "Now you may tell Crawford and Nightingale to go on." From the spot where these words were uttered, he surveyed the whole field, and dealt out reinforcements to the troops which were struggling in the defiles, as a skilful dealer distributes his cards at a game of whist. And finally, when he saw the plateau crowned, he put spurs to his horse, galloped to the summit, and made such fresh dispositions as the circumstances required. The perfect coolness with which

all this was done, his unfailing good humour, the apparent indifference with which he regarded mistakes, taking care however to correct them, inspired all who were at hand to witness his proceedings with admiration. It may be truly said that on that day the officers and men of the British army gave him their entire confidence, and we know that they never afterwards withdrew it, even partially. The battle of Roliça lasted a long time. It might be six or seven in the morning when the English began to move; it was three or four in the afternoon before the firing ceased. The men, enfeebled by confinement on board of ship, were quite knocked up, and the artillery horses, all in wretched condition, could with difficulty drag the guns. As to the cavalry, it never struck a blow. The nature of the country, rugged and broken, kept horsemen in the rear, till the plateau was won; and when they arrived on the table-land, they found themselves inferior in every respect to the French. No pursuit was therefore attempted, but on the ground which they had won the troops lay down and slept.

It is necessary to bear in mind that Sir Arthur laboured at this time under great disadvantages. He had ceased to be the commander-in-chief of an army, and had become the mere leader of an advanced guard. As such he had done more than most men would have attempted. Not satisfied with making good his own landing, he had fought a successful battle, and ensured thereby a safe debarkation for the corps which were to follow. Tidings of the approach of several of these had already reached him. General Anstruther with 3000 or 4000 men was in the Tagus. Sir John Moore with 10,000 was reported to be in the offing, and Lieutenant-General Sir Harry Burrard might from hour to hour be expected. If all this intelligence, important as it was, had been kept back for four-and-twenty hours, Sir Arthur would have marched on the 18th to Torres Vedras, and cut off the communication of De la Borde and Loison with Lisbon. Under existing circumstances he felt himself constrained to desist from an operation which, however it might have redounded to his own honour, could not fail more or less to embarrass those to whom the management of the campaign had been entrusted. He contented himself therefore with putting upon paper his own views of what ought to be done, and led his corps to Vimeiro, that it might be at hand to protect the disembarkation of Anstruther's brigade, and to receive Sir Harry Burrard when he should arrive.

Sir Arthur proposed that while the main body of the army,

now raised by the arrival of Anstruther to 17,000 men, marched by the coast road, round Torres Vedras to Mafra, Sir John Moore should land at the mouth of the Mondego, and push direct for Santarem. He showed that this double movement would at once turn the enemy's position in front of Lisbon, and cut them off from the only line of retreat upon the road to Elvas. Nor, as he personally explained to Sir Harry Burrard, whom he visited on the 20th on board the frigate, would the operation be attended by any of the inconveniences incident under common circumstances to movements on double lines. Without Sir John Moore Sir Harry was superior to anything that Junot could hope to bring against him. There was no good reason, therefore, why he should hesitate to act on the offensive, particularly when he had it in his power to place a strong corps in the enemy's rear. But to such reasoning Sir Harry was deaf. He did not come to run any risks. He considered a flank march by a narrow coast road to be dangerous, and preferred waiting for Sir John Moore, whom he had directed to steer for the Tagus. Except when specially called upon so to do, Sir Arthur never entered into arguments with his superiors; he returned, therefore, to the camp at Vimeiro and cancelled the order which had already been issued for moving at daylight on the morrow.

Sir Arthur went to bed not entirely pleased, and had slept some hours when a troop serjeant-major of the 21st Light Dragoons was brought by an aide-de-camp to his bedside. The man was a German. His name was Landsheit, and the reader who is curious to know more about him will find his story told at length in a volume entitled *The Huzzar*. Landsheit spoke English but imperfectly, and seemed to Sir Arthur to be a good deal agitated, an imputation which the gallant veteran put from him ever after with high disdain. But agitated or calm, he reported, that patrolling to the front he had encountered a French scouting party, and had reason to believe that the enemy were coming on to the attack. For this, as for every other emergency, Sir Arthur was prepared. His position, though not in a military point of view strong, was sufficiently so to give him confidence, and his outposts were all so placed that surprise was impossible. He dismissed Landsheit, therefore, with a kindly word, laid his head upon the pillow again, and went to sleep. He was up before dawn, and had all his people under arms. In less than an hour the battle began.

How the enemy came on and were repulsed, with what skill Sir Arthur handled his troops in this his first defensive action,

and how anxious he was to follow up the victory, these matters are told at length elsewhere. But power had at this time departed from him. Sir Harry Burrard reached the ground while the battle was still raging, and stopped the pursuit, which would have converted the retreat into a rout. The enemy were in consequence enabled to reunite on strong ground at Torres Vedras, while the English stood still. On the 22nd, however, Sir Harry consented to move, and just then a second commander-in-chief arrived to supersede him. Sir Hugh Dalrymple became now the moving spirit in the camp, and the camp at once acknowledged his influence. On the 23rd General Kellerman came in from the headquarters of the French army, with proposals to conclude an armistice as a step preliminary to capitulation. The following are the terms in which Sir Arthur speaks of these proceedings. His letter is addressed to Lord Castlereagh:—

"*23rd April*, 1808.

"My dear Lord,—You will have heard that one of the consequences of our victory of the 21st has been an agreement to suspend hostilities between the French and us, preparatory to the negotiation of a convention for the evacuation of Portugal by the French. Although my name is affixed to this instrument I beg that you will not believe that I negotiated it, that I approve of it, or that I had any hand in wording it. It was negotiated by the General himself in my presence and that of Sir Harry Burrard; and after it had been drawn out by Kellerman himself, Sir Hugh Dalrymple desired me to sign it. I object to its *verbiage;* I object to an indefinite suspension of hostilities; it ought to have been for forty-eight hours only. As it is now, the French will have forty-eight hours to prepare for their defence, after Sir Hugh will put an end to the suspension.

"I approve of allowing the French to evacuate Portugal, more particularly as it appears to be deemed impossible to move Sir John Moore's corps upon Santarem, so as to cut off the retreat of the French towards Elvas. They could establish themselves in Elvas, Fort La Lippe, Almeida, and Peniché, which places we should be obliged either to blockade or attack regularly in the worst season of the year in Portugal, viz. the months of September and October; and the advance of the army into Spain would be delayed until after that period. It is more for the advantage of the general cause to have 30,000 Englishmen in Spain and 10,000 or 12,000 additional Frenchmen

on the northern frontier of Spain, than to have the Frenchmen in Portugal, and the Englishmen employed in the blockade or siege of strong places. If they are to be allowed to evacuate it must be with their property, but I should have wished to adopt some mode of making the French generals disgorge the Church plate which they have stolen."

Such was the part, and the only part, played by Sir Arthur Wellesley in transactions which were felt in England to have robbed the victorious army of the legitimate fruits of its valour. It went against the grain with him to affix his signature even to the document which suspended hostilities. Indeed his remark to friends who met him, as he returned from executing that task, showed how little he had been satisfied with it. "What are we to do next? Hunt red-legged partridges, I suppose;" an occupation to which the young officers addicted themselves, the birds abounding in the neighbourhood. But further than this he declined to go. Indeed he was neither present when the commissioners signed the convention, nor did he become acquainted with its contents till the whole were ratified. His manner, moreover, though always respectful, became thenceforth distant towards Sir Hugh Dalrymple, who was sharp-sighted enough to understand that his subordinate, while obeying every order, entertained no great respect for the source whence it emanated. Sir Hugh accordingly endeavoured to get rid of Sir Arthur, by proposing that he should travel to Madrid, and arrange there a plan of combined operations with the Spanish authorities. That proposal, of which he distrusted the sincerity, Sir Arthur contrived to evade, taking care, however, to submit copies of the correspondence to Lord Castlereagh; and the result was that to Lord William Bentinck, and not to him, the Spanish mission was assigned.

From that day the tone and temper of the British camp underwent a change. Everywhere, from generals commanding divisions down to private sentinels, there was a sense of mortification and well nigh of anger, which, had the command continued to rest where it then was, must have produced the worst consequences. Sir Hugh Dalrymple was personally unpopular, for which his mode of maintaining discipline sufficiently accounted. He was habitually harsh, stern, and uncivil, both to officers and men. But over and above this, there were causes of offence of a graver character and more deeply seated. He had been thrust by court favour into the position which he held,

after something like a specific promise given to Sir John Moore, that to him the command of the army should be entrusted. This produced, as was natural, great indignation on the part of Moore's friends, and of disquiet to Moore himself, who had more than one confidential conference with Sir Arthur upon the subject, and seems to have been dissuaded by him from applying to be recalled. The consequence was the total loss of harmony in a body, which, till the arrival of the new commander-in-chief, had deserved all the praises which Sir Arthur Wellesley bestowed upon it. On one point, however, there was no difference of opinion. The victor of Roliça and Vimeiro was held in the greatest admiration and respect; and of this a public manifestation was made as soon as it became known that he was about to quit the camp. The officers commanding corps, and the field-officers of the army, agreed to present an address to Sir Arthur, with a request that he would accept at their hands a piece of plate. This was done on the 18th September, through the medium of Colonel Kemmis, the oldest field-officer among them, and accepted by Sir Arthur with all the frankness which formed part of his nature. In two days afterwards, having led his division into Lisbon, and seen the last of Junot's force on board of ship, he himself quitted the seat of war and returned home.

CHAPTER VII

IN LONDON—IN DUBLIN—IN COMMAND OF A NEW ARMY

Sir Arthur landed at Plymouth on the 4th of October, his departure from Portugal having been precipitated by the death of Mr. Grant, the gentleman who, during his absence, had undertaken to discharge the current business of the secretary's office in Ireland. He wrote immediately to the Duke of Richmond, who was still Lord-Lieutenant, and announced his intention of presenting himself in Dublin without delay; but found it impossible to carry that design into effect. For the public mind of England was in a state of the highest excitement and indignation, on account of the abortive conclusion, as it was called, of the campaign in Portugal. The Convention of Cintra was stigmatised, not as impolitic only, but iniquitous; and all who were believed to have taken any part in its management were denounced as traitors. Among others Sir Arthur Wellesley came in for no small share of blame. Dalrymple had managed to convey an impression, that it was entirely by Wellesley's advice that he had been guided in the matter, and Wellesley's signature attached to the preliminary treaty was accepted, by the newspapers and the people, as conclusive testimony to the truth of the statement. One word from Sir Arthur in public would have turned the tide and thrown the obloquy upon others; but with rare self-denial he refused to speak or to write it. Still he found it necessary in defence of his own character to remain some days in London, and he did not hesitate in his private correspondence to assign his reasons for so doing. Subjoined is a specimen of the temper in which this correspondence was carried on.

To the Marquis of Buckingham

"London, *11th Oct.*, 1808.

"My dear Lord,—I assure you that I am most sensible of the friendship and kindness of Lord Temple and yourself, of which I hope to prove myself worthy. My situation is a very

awkward one, and I can relieve myself from it only by the result of an inquiry.

"I am accused of being the adviser of persons over whom I had no control and who refused to follow my advice, and am made responsible for the acts of others. The real share which I have had in the transactions,—which, in my opinion, have deservedly incurred the displeasure of the public,—cannot be known till they will be inquired into; and in the meantime Sir Hugh Dalrymple has left the government and the public so completely in the dark respecting the military expediency of allowing the French to evacuate Portugal, that that part of the question, which is the only one in which I am involved, is as little understood as the rest. I know of no immediate remedy for these difficulties of my situation, excepting patience and temper, and I thank God that the undeserved abuse which has been heaped upon me has not altered the latter.

"In respect to the conduct of my case, I have determined that I will publish nothing, nor will authorise the publication of anything by others. This forbearance is particularly incumbent upon me, as the whole subject must be inquired into. I have also determined that I will not involve others in scrapes because they differed in opinion with me previously to the 22nd of August, notwithstanding that difference of opinion and the alteration of system were the cause of the military expediency of allowing the French to withdraw from Portugal. I am afraid that I shall experience some difficulty in carrying this intention into execution, because the truth must come out; but I will endeavour not to bring others (viz. Sir Harry Burrard) into a scrape, not only out of regard to him, but because I think it fatal to the public service to expose officers to the treatment which I have received, and to punishment for acting upon their own military opinions, which opinions they may fairly entertain. I have also determined to stand singly. There is nothing in common between Sir Hugh Dalrymple and me, or between the government and me, if the government are supposed to be involved in the question, and I shall act accordingly.

"I now enclose your lordship the copy of a letter, etc."

Meanwhile, not less thoughtful of others than of himself, he waited upon Lord Castlereagh, and informed him, both as to the feelings of Sir John Moore and the estimation in which that officer was held by the army in Portugal. The following letter to Sir John sufficiently explains the result of the interview:—

To Lieut.-General Sir John Moore, K.B.

"London, *8th Oct.*, 1808.

"My dear General,—I arrived in London on Thursday, and I yesterday took an opportunity of mentioning to Lord Castlereagh what I told you I should, notwithstanding that I found, upon my arrival in England, that the object I had in view in conversing with you upon this subject at all had been accomplished by your appointment to command the army. I told Lord Castlereagh that you thought that government had not treated you well, and that you had considered it incumbent upon you to express your sentiments upon that treatment; but that after you had done so, you had thought no more of the matter, and that it would be found that you would serve as cordially and as zealously in any situation in which you might be employed as if nothing of the kind had ever passed.

"Lord Castlereagh said that he had never entertained any doubt upon this subject; and that after he had communicated to you the sentiments of the king's government upon what had passed, his only wish respecting you had been to employ you in the manner in which you were most likely to be useful to the country.

"I find that by the distribution I am placed under your command, than which nothing can be more satisfactory to me. I will go to Coruña immediately, where I hope to find you.

"You'll have seen by the newspapers that the late transactions in Portugal have made a stronger sensation here than it was imagined they would, and I have had what I think more than my share of the blame. I suppose that there must be an inquiry into the transactions; and till that takes place, I shall leave the public to find out the truth in the best way they can, and shall not adopt any illegitimate mode of setting them right. In the meantime the abuse of the news-writers of London will not deprive me of my temper or my spirits, or of the zeal with which I will forward every wish of yours.—Ever, etc.,

"Arthur Wellesley.

"Since writing the above I find that it will be necessary that I should wait in England till Sir Hugh Dalrymple will return, and it will be known at what time the inquiry will be made into the late transactions in Portugal on which I am to be

examined. I will join you, however, the moment I am set at liberty, for which I long most anxiously.

" I send a duplicate of this letter to Coruña."

It appears from this letter that Sir Arthur had accepted a command in the army to the head of which Sir John Moore was to be elevated. The following shows that he had not forgotten another officer, to whose merits he more than once testified. It conveys, besides, such a true picture of the entire disinterestedness of the writer, that I cannot refuse to give it a place in these pages.

To Viscount Castlereagh.

" London, *14th Oct.*, 1808.

" My dear Castlereagh,—After I saw you on Saturday I spoke to Colonel Gordon, and he agreed entirely in opinion with me, that it was expedient to recommend General Spencer to the king at an early period for some mark of his Majesty's favour, and he promised to speak to the Duke of York upon the subject.

" I have always been of opinion that I should not be able to convince the public of the goodness of my motives for signing the armistice; and the late discussions in Middlesex and elsewhere, and the paragraphs in the newspapers, which after all rule everything in this country, tend to convince me that it is determined that I shall not have the benefit of an acquittal, and that the news-writers and the orators of the day are determined to listen to nothing in my justification. I am, therefore, quite certain that the government will not be able to recommend me for any mark of the king's favour to which they might otherwise think me entitled. If this turns out to be true, the ministers will be obliged to recommend that a mark of the king's favour should be conferred on General Spencer, and not on me, although both were employed on the same service, and this after an inquiry will have been held in which my conduct will have been investigated. They will be obliged to adopt this line, notwithstanding that I hope they will be convinced of the propriety of my conduct, and the goodness of my motives in every instance; or they must determine not to confer upon General Spencer those marks of the king's favour which his services undoubtedly merit.

" I have no doubt of the alternative which the ministers will be inclined to adopt. I am convinced that Spencer himself will urge them not to think of him if the king's favour cannot

be extended to me, and thus he will lose what he so well deserves. I am convinced that this will be the result of any further delay.

"I wish, therefore, that you would immediately recommend Spencer for what you think he ought to have. There can be no doubt of his merit on every ground; and nobody can with reason complain that an injustice is done to me because even my most sanguine friends cannot think that I am in a situation to receive any mark of his Majesty's favour.

"I wish you would turn this subject over in your mind, and you will discover that great difficulties will be avoided by adopting immediately the measure which I most earnestly recommend.—Believe me, etc.,

"Arthur Wellesley.

"P.S.—It is said that Spencer would not like to accept any mark of the king's favour at present, but I am convinced that I shall be able to prevail with him."

Having brought his affairs to this point, Sir Arthur departed for Ireland, where, indifferent to the wrong which was done him by the English people, he resumed the course of his civil duties. There he remained till the beginning of November, when the assembling at Chelsea Hospital of the court to inquire into the circumstances of the late campaign, and of the convention in which it resulted, recalled him to London. In common with Sir Hugh Dalrymple and Sir Harry Burrard, he appeared before the court, where each gave his own statement, and supported it by his own line of argument. There is no reason now to conceal or disguise the fact, that the conclusions at which the court arrived were all pretty well arranged beforehand. Sir Arthur, still treating with the utmost possible delicacy officers who were not by any means so delicate towards him, proved his own case. The court listened with partial ears to the statements of Sir Hugh and Sir Harry; and the final issue was a declaration, that nobody was to blame; that all which could have been reasonably expected under the circumstances had been done, so that further proceedings in the case were not necessary. Absurd as the decision was, Sir Arthur made no protest against it; but went back to Ireland, and busied himself as before in such affairs as came usually under the cognisance of chief secretaries in those days of Protestant ascendency and government by influence.

Time passed, and early in January, 1809, parliament met.

One of the first acts of both Houses was to pass a vote of thanks to Sir Arthur Wellesley and the army which had served under him; a measure which pleased him, not alone because his own good name was thereby vindicated, but because the impediments were removed which had heretofore stood between his friend General Spencer and the honours for which he had recommended him. But business of a graver nature soon followed. Sir John Moore's campaign had ended unsuccessfully. The Spanish armies, with which he proposed to cooperate, were dispersed, and the battle of Coruña, while it saved the honour of the British arms, cost the life of the brave officer who commanded. The victors reached their ships in safety, and withdrew from the Galician coasts. For a moment a conviction of the hopelessness of the struggle took possession of the English mind. But the heart of the nation was still resolute, and the cabinet decided to make one effort more for the liberties of Europe in the Spanish Peninsula. It was natural enough that the British Government should make Spain, rather than Portugal, the first object of their care. Spain was the larger and more populous country of the two, and it had been impressed upon their minds by Sir John Moore, and indeed by all whom they had heretofore consulted, that to defend Portugal after Spain should have been overrun was impossible. Lord Castlereagh therefore proposed to the Junta of Seville, which had by this time assumed the functions of supreme government, that Cadiz should become the base of operations for a British army; and then, and not till then, he bethought him of consulting Sir Arthur Wellesley. On the 7th of March he received in reply a memorandum, which not only answered every question proposed, but took a view of the case so masterly and comprehensive as to leave no single point connected with it untouched. Sir Arthur begins that remarkable paper in these words. "I have always been of opinion that Portugal might be defended, whatever might have been the result of the contest in Spain, and that in the meantime the measures adopted for the defence of Portugal would be highly useful to the Spaniards in their contest with the French." He then goes on to justify this assertion, and to explain that in Portugal, with its feeble government and docile population, a native army could be officered by Englishmen, which being intermixed with English troops, would soon be rendered capable of facing the best of the continental armies. It was thus that at every new stage in his career the great duke was accustomed to turn to

account the experience which the past had given him. He had evidently in his mind when he offered this suggestion the native army of India and its capabilities, and often in after years he used to compare that army with his Portuguese levies, giving however a marked preference to the latter. But he did not, in the memorandum of which I am now speaking, confine himself to matters of detail. He described Napoleon's political system as one of terror, which must crumble to pieces if once effectually checked; and he expressed a belief that in Portugal, if wisely dealt with, the first decided check would be given to that system. Sir Arthur's minute was read in cabinet, and produced a strong effect, and the refusal of the Spaniards to receive a British garrison into Cadiz arriving not long afterwards, Sir Arthur's views were unanimously adopted. There remained then but one course for the government to follow. Sir Arthur was requested to assume the command of the army, which it was determined to employ in the Peninsula, and he did so without a moment's hesitation.

Before his own government arrived at these conclusions, the command of the Portuguese army had been pressed upon Sir Arthur by the Portuguese Government, and declined. He easily prevailed, however, to get that important trust committed to General—afterwards Lord—Viscount Beresford, an officer of whom he entertained a high opinion; and who, on account of his knowledge of the Portuguese language, was well fitted to act with Portuguese troops. But the arrangement interfered in no respect with the larger plan on which the English Government had determined. England was henceforward to become a principal in the war which impended. She was to take into her pay, to discipline and equip, a certain number of Portuguese troops, and the whole military resources of the kingdom were to be placed in return at the disposal of the English general. Sir Arthur Wellesley had nothing more to desire. He resigned at once and for ever his seat in the House of Commons, and the office which he had so long and usefully held in Ireland, and turned his attention to the great work which was cut out for him. For everything which he considered necessary to the equipment and efficiency of a army in the field he applied in writing. No single article, from a battalion of infantry to a pair of shoes, was forgotten. Suits of clothing, stands of arms, sets of accoutrements for the Portuguese levies, horses, guns, muskets, ammunition, intrenching tools, horse-shoes, nails, hammers, all were distinctly

specified. If either at the outset or at any subsequent stage in the campaign the army of which he was at the head suffered from the lack of anything, the fault never rested with him.

This unceasing attention to details, this care for all possible wants before they occurred, forms one of the most remarkable features in the character of the great Duke of Wellington as a general. Another of his peculiarities as a man deserves notice. He seems never to have been so engrossed by any particular subject as to be incapacitated from discussing others with as much clearness as if each had touched the very point to which his attention was mainly directed. At this moment, for example, when other minds than his own would have been filled with the coming war and the preparations for it, we find him corresponding in his usual style, now with the Duke of Richmond on Irish affairs, now with inventors on the subject of their inventions, now with the President of the Board of Control upon Indian subjects, and largely with his private friends and acquaintances about the common gossip and business of life. In some of these letters there is an elasticity and even playfulness of tone which shows that, however grave the responsibility which he was about to assume, it by no means weighed him down. And this is the more remarkable that the condition of Portugal, political as well as military, was at that time as little promising as can well be conceived. The departure of the French had left the country without a government. Army there was none, in any proper sense of the term; for the few battalions which existed were without discipline, without military spirit, without even arms; and the mobs of Lisbon and Oporto, stirred up by the brothers Souza and the bishop, clamoured against the English as having betrayed them, and insulted English officers as they walked the streets. There is no knowing to what extent this feeling might have been carried, had not General Craddock, whom Moore had left in command, threatened to withdraw his troops altogether. This brought them a little to their senses; the regency began to act again, and a levy *en masse* was ordered. Beresford proceeded to place himself at its head, and did his best to introduce discipline into the ranks. It was to a country so circumstanced, and with a force at his disposal of less than 16,000 men on the spot, and promised reinforcements amounting to barely 8000 more, that Sir Arthur Wellesley made ready to proceed; nowise distrustful that, if a litle time were afforded him, he should be able to make successful head against the whole strength of the French Empire.

CHAPTER VIII

IN PORTUGAL

On the 16th of April, 1809, Sir Arthur Wellesley took ship at Portsmouth, and on the 22nd, after a tempestuous and uncomfortable voyage, he arrived in the Tagus. His reception by the people and authorities of Lisbon was enthusiastic in the extreme. Fear, jealousy, suspicion, ill-will, seemed to disperse before him, and all classes, high and low, crowded to greet and assure him of their confidence. He did not allow the popular enthusiasm to grow cold. With consummate tact he got the regency together, and prevailed upon them to pass whatever resolutions were proposed, and then he set himself in right good earnest to the task which he had undertaken.

Two French corps at this time threatened Lisbon from opposite sides of the Tagus. Soult, with 20,000 men, or thereabouts, was in Oporto—having his outposts advanced as far as the right bank of the Vouga. Victor, with 28,000, lay at Merida in Estremadura. There was nothing in the field to oppose to either of them, except the remains of certain Spanish armies, every one of which had sustained a defeat, and was therefore demoralised as well as undisciplined. But the practised eye of Sir Arthur was not slow to discover that the distance between these two French corps was too great to enable them mutually to support one another. He resolved, therefore, to strike at them in detail; and after well considering the subject he made up his mind to sacrifice military to political considerations, and to begin with Soult.

The promised reinforcements from England arrived by degrees, and Sir Arthur at the end of a week was able to bring into line about 35,000 men. Of these 15,000 were Portuguese, of whom 9000 with 13,000 English and 3000 German troops he directed to assemble at Coimbra. The remainder he so posted as that they should be able to impede, if they could not stop, the advance of Victor, in the event of his endeavouring to pass the Tagus. The various brigades and corps followed the routes which were pointed out to them, and on the 2nd of May he

himself arrived at Coimbra. On the 3rd he passed his army in review; on the 4th it was distributed into eight brigades of infantry and one of cavalry; and on the 6th the advance began. How entirely the French were without partisans at that time in Portugal is shown by the fact that not a rumour of this concentration reached them, though Soult had his outposts within three easy marches of the point where the concentration took place.

It is not my intention to describe in detail the campaign of the Douro, or any other campaign in the famous Peninsular war. My present purpose is rather with the great man who led the allied armies than with the armies themselves; of which therefore I shall endeavour to speak more as of the instruments with which he executed his purposes than as agents in the execution of these purposes. And adhering to this resolve it will content me to state that the Vouga was crossed by the English on the morning of the 10th; that in the course of the same day an affair occurred with the enemy's posts, and that the enemy, leaving three guns behind and a few men killed and wounded, hastily retreated. They crossed the Douro on a bridge of boats which was immediately removed, and so placing a broad river between them and the English, they took shelter in Oporto, and believed themselves safe.

During the progress of this advance, Sir Arthur seemed to do everything and to be everywhere. He personally directed the movements of the columns, regulating the very pace at which men and horse should travel; and gave by these means to all under his orders, from generals of brigade to the members of his personal staff, their first distinct lesson in the art of war. Once by over-precipitation on the part of the officer who led, his advanced guard failed to surprise a body of French troops which lay carelessly among some villages about eight miles in rear of the Vouga. The circumstance was provoking enough, but Sir Arthur kept his temper. He contented himself with sending for the officer and explaining, "that courage is an admirable quality, but that discretion and judgment are quite as necessary, particularly in the leader of an advanced guard." On the other hand he was always prompt to observe, and to commend military talent and judicious enterprise, by whomsoever exhibited. Take the following as an example.

With a view to cut off the retreat of Soult upon Braga, Sir Arthur had detached General Beresford with his Portuguese towards Lamego, giving him orders to cross the Douro there,

and to seize and hold the bridge at Amarante. Beresford was further directed to collect as many boats as he could find, and to send them down the stream for the use of the main army. For it had not escaped the calculations of Sir Arthur that the enemy would certainly remove their pontoon bridge, and that probably nothing available for the transport of men and guns would be found on his side of the water. And so it fell out. When the leading corps of the British army arrived in sight of Oporto, the last link of the bridge was swinging round, and neither skiff nor boat of any kind could be seen, except drawn up and made fast along the far-off bank of the river.

The left bank of the Douro consists of a series of heights, with one called the Serra dominating over all the rest. Opposite to the Serra on the other side was a large building, called the Seminary, which with its gardens and outbuildings Sir Arthur was well pleased to find that the French had not taken the trouble to occupy. It was exactly the sort of place in which to make an effective lodgment, and he looked at it with longing eyes. But no boats appeared descending the stream, and though he ran up 20 guns and planted them so as to command the seminary and its approaches, he could attempt nothing further. He placed his men, therefore, under cover, and sat down to chat, as was his custom, with the gentlemen of his staff. There was one among these, Captain Waters, whose readiness of resource, often tested afterwards, found there for the first time a field on which to work. Waters suddenly darted off from the throng, and for half an hour or more nothing was seen of him. But presently the tall reeds which overshadow the margin of the Douro, and, where the banks are low, run a good way inland, began to shake, and by and by a little skiff, with six men on board, shot out into the deep. One of these men was Waters. He had observed the skiff concealed among the reeds and stuck fast in the mud, and after vainly struggling single-handed to set it free, had run off in search of help. By great good luck a sturdy ecclesiastic, the prior of the Convent of Amarante, met him, and he, entering heartly into the design, was not slow in finding four peasants to co-operate with them. They all returned to the place where the skiff lay, and the oars happening to be on board, they soon got her afloat and pushed off. "By G—," exclaimed Sir Arthur, "Waters has done the job." And so he had. While the general and those about him watched the result with great eagerness, Waters and his crew struck out like men. They made for a point where, just above

the seminary, three barges lay; and undoing the lashings they made them fast to their own boat, and pulled across again. The results are well known. A handful of men passed the river in these barges—the seminary was occupied before the alarm was given, and when the enemy endeavoured to retake it, the fire from the guns on the opposite bank swept them away. The inhabitants of Oporto threw themselves into the game, and scores of boats shot across the river and were at once laden. Sir Arthur never forgot the services of Waters on that day. He obtained for him deserved promotion, and employed him afterwards in many a perilous and important service, out of which he always came triumphant.

The passage of the Douro was one of those brilliant affairs which only men of genius, as well as hardihood, think of attempting. It succeeded mainly because success was believed to be impossible. It led to the expulsion of the enemy from the city, and their painful flight across the mountains of Tras os Montes in Galicia, with the loss of all their guns and baggage, and of 6000 men killed, wounded, and taken. The pursuit, which had been vigorously pressed till fatigue and privation began to tell upon the pursuers, was at length abandoned. "If an army," wrote Sir Arthur to Lord Castlereagh describing the operation, "throws away all its cannon, equipments, and baggage, and everything which can strengthen it and enable it to act as a body, and abandons all those who are entitled to its protection, but add to its weight and impede its progress, it must be able to march through roads by which it cannot be followed with any prospect of being overtaken by an army which has not made the same sacrifices." This is true—and it was only by making these enormous sacrifices that Soult and his army escaped. Yet Sir Arthur did not come off scatheless. Not more than 300 English soldiers fell by sword and bullet in the course of the campaign; but when he returned on the 21st to Oporto, Sir Arthur found that 4000 were down from sickness, and that among such as still kept their places in the ranks, many were shoeless, and not a few in rags. So severe is the strain of even a successful operation, if it be conducted rapidly, on the morale and equipment of an army.

Having thus cleared Portugal on one side, Sir Arthur turned his attention to the dangers which threatened elsewhere, and made such preparations as he could for marching against Victor. His idea was to strike first at a French division which lay at Alcantara, higher up the Douro. But General Lepice, who

commanded in that quarter, prudently retreated, and a mixed English and Portuguese force was sent to guard the bridge which there spans the river. Back, therefore, in the direction of Coimbra and Abrantes, Sir Arthur moved. His movements, however, were not as they had been in advancing, rapid and continuous. Means of transport failed him. The Portuguese Government was supine in supplying them, and the support which he received from England came in slowly and by driblets. He was thus constrained to halt at Abrantes many precious days. These were not days of idleness or rest to him. His correspondence had become enormous. It was carried on with ministers of state, with the governors of provinces; with his own and the general officers of the Spanish and Portuguese armies: with commissaries, doctors, purveyors, and private friends; and it embraced every topic connected with the history of the times, from the policy of great empires down to the feeding of private sentinels. Those portions of it which have been considered worthy of publication fill, for this single year, three large and closely printed octavo volumes; so untiring was that great man's industry, so well regulated his disposition of time.

CHAPTER IX

MOVES TOWARDS CUESTA—BATTLE OF TALAVERA

THERE were at this time in the Spanish Peninsula 250,000 French troops; all admirably equipped, in the highest state of discipline, and commanded by the foremost of Napoleon's generals. They were, of course, a good deal scattered, for the area was wide, and the insurrection threatened everywhere. But within a radius of 100 miles, taking Madrid as a centre, 100,000 at least lay, by divisions, each within reasonable distance from all the rest. Joseph himself was in Madrid with 6000 or 8000. Sebastiani was at Toledo with 12,000; Mortier, with 18,000, lay at Villa Castin; Victor was at Cassares with 28,000. Meanwhile Soult, having refitted at Lugo, was as far in advance again as Salamanca, where the coming in of Ney's corps raised his effectives to upwards of 30,000. On the other side, if we except the English army now reduced to 20,000 fit for duty, and to a certain extent the Portuguese, of whom about 17,000 had profited by English instruction, there was nothing to oppose to this well-disciplined array save bodies of half-armed and untrained Spaniards, under the command of officers ignorant of the first principles of the art of war. Sir Arthur was in Abrantes with 18,000 excellent troops, General Mackenzie held Alcantara with 8000, of whom 2000 only were English. Marshal Beresford was at Almeida with 15,000 Portuguese. There were assembled in the hill country of Estremadura about 4000 partisans under Sir Robert Wilson; 12,000 Spaniards under the Duke del Parque lay in and about Ciudad-Rodrigo, 26,000 were with Venegas among the mountains of Toledo, and 40,000, with old General Cuesta at their head, occupied a position half way between Medellin and Cassares. Sir Robert Wilson's partisans consisted chiefly of Portuguese smugglers, individually brave and hardy but lawless and without discipline, while the Spanish armies of Cuesta, Venegas, and del Parque were but the remains of those levies which Napoleon and his generals had defeated, reinforced by peasants untrained, and many of them without arms.

Sir Arthur had not yet come into personal contact with

Spanish armies and their leaders. He had heard enough of their proceedings during the campaign of 1808 to prevent his counting much upon them, but he could not believe that they were so utterly worthless as experience proved them to be. He entered, therefore, readily into negotiations with Cuesta, and arranged with him a plan of which the following are the outlines. While Sir Arthur and Cuesta, uniting their forces, were to advance by Almaraz and Placentia upon Madrid, Venegas, pushing forward from La Manca towards Aranjuez, was to interpose between Victor and Sebastiani. Meanwhile Sir Robert Wilson was to seize the Escurial, threatening thereby Joseph's communications with the North. At the same time Beresford and the Duke del Parque were to occupy the attention of the French corps which lay at Salamanca; and finally, the valley of the Tagus was to be rendered safe by detaching two Spanish brigades from Cuesta's army to the passes of Baños and Porales, in support of which, without interfering with their proper objects, both Beresford and Wilson could manœuvre.

Nothing could be more perfect than this plan. It was approved in all its details by General Cuesta, who urged Sir Arthur to immediate action, and assured him of ample supplies as well as of abundant means of transport as soon as the English should enter Spain. The English did enter Spain, and there their difficulties began. There were no supplies for them, no means of transport, scarcely the pretence of friendly feeling among the inhabitants. More than once indeed Sir Arthur hesitated whether he should not abandon the enterprise, so disgusted was he with the culpable negligence of his colleague, and so indignant with the indifference of the Spanish nation to the sufferings of his troops. It was not, however, in his nature to break an engagement once contracted. He pushed on, therefore, and on the 20th of July found himself at Oropesa in personal communication with Cuesta. Then the illusion, if any had hitherto rested upon his mind, vanished altogether. The Spanish army was drawn up that he might see it, and the review took place partly by torch-light; it satisfied Sir Arthur, that however good the materials might be, they were as yet a mere shapeless mass. "I am sure I don't know what we are to do with these people," was his remark to Colonel Murray, as they rode back to their own lines; "put them behind stone walls, and I daresay they would defend them, but to manœuvre with such a rabble under fire, is impossible. I am afraid we shall find them an encumbrance rather than otherwise."

If Sir Arthur was disgusted with the temper of the Spanish people, and with the military appearance of the Spanish troops, he found little to console him under the disappointment in the mental, and even the physical, qualities of the Spanish generals. Some, like Cuesta, were old men, so decrepit in person as to be incapable without assistance of getting upon horseback. Others, like Venegas, had received no early training in the profession of arms, and all, without exception, were proud, boastful, slow, without forethought, and apparently ignorant of the value of time. There is good reason to believe that Sir Arthur, if he could have done so without compromising his own and his country's honour, would have abandoned all thought of co-operating with allies so little to be depended upon. Not feeling himself justified in taking this decided step, he made up his mind to go forward cautiously, and to avoid being drawn by Spanish presumption into scrapes from which Spanish valour would certainly not deliver him.

The arrival of the English army at Oropesa gave the signal to Victor to retire. He fell back through Traxillo upon Almaraz, crossed the Tagus there, and made no halt till he reached a somewhat indifferent position, about two miles on the further side of Talavera de la Reyna. Sir Arthur and General Cuesta followed, and passed the night of the 22nd of July in Talavera itself. They had thus achieved the main purpose of their junction, for the enemy was before them inferior in point of numbers, and so near as to leave to them the option of a battle. But no argument could prevail with Cuesta to make this option. Without assigning any reason, he refused to co-operate with Sir Arthur in attacking Victor on the 23rd, and on the morning of the 24th the French were gone. Now then the Spanish general was seized with an irrepressible desire to act. He urged an immediate pursuit, and when Sir Arthur quietly observed that no good could arise, because the opportunity of striking an effective blow had passed from them, his indignation boiled over. He would go forward alone; he would himself overwhelm the fugitives and deliver Madrid; and forward alone he went. Sir Arthur, finding remonstrance useless, threw two divisions of infantry and some cavalry across the Alberche in order to keep open Cuesta's communications with himself, and then sat down to wait the event of which he seems never for a moment to have been doubtful.

While these things were going on, Venegas, instead of pushing, as he ought to have done, upon Aranjuez, loitered at La

Manca, and the two Spanish brigades which were due in the passes of Baños and Porales, never made their appearance. The former of these blunders enabled Joseph and Sebastiani to unite their forces with those of Victor. The latter exposed the position at Talavera to be turned in the rear. Of both mishaps Sir Arthur remained for two days ignorant, but on the 26th the sudden appearance of Cuesta's people, running and riding in hot haste towards the Alberche, warned him that evil had befallen. Cuesta, it appeared, marching straight to Alcabon, was there turned upon and defeated by Victor; and now brought intelligence that at least 50,000 French troops might be expected at any moment to fall upon the allies.

Sir Arthur's plan of campaign was completely defeated. He had counted much more than he ever did at any subsequent period on Spanish co-operation, and it failed him. Had he been free to consult his own judgment as a soldier, he would have doubtless separated the English army from that of Cuesta, and fallen back the same day, without risking a battle, into Portugal. But it was necessary to prove to the Spanish nation that England was in earnest, and to satisfy the English people that their allies had not been abandoned in the hour of need. Nothing doubting therefore that his rear at all events was safe, and confident in the stubborn courage of his own men, he determined to accept a battle on the ground where he stood. And it was, in a military point of view, very defensible. It extended for about two miles across a plain, having the town of Talavera on one flank, and the mountain ranges which close in the valley of the Tagus on the other. And it embraced here and there a knoll, or eminence, and a good deal of wood with banks and hollow roads and walled gardens, especially in the direction of Talavera. Sir Arthur so arranged his troops that the English held the centre and left where the ground was the most open, and the Spaniards, of whom Cuesta in his humiliation entreated him to take the command, were massed among the gardens and enclosures in front of the town. A little way in advance of Talavera, not far from the river Alberche, stands the Casa de Selinas, a fine old château surrounded by extensive woods. Through these woods several roads passed, and among them Sir Arthur left an English division in observation, with about 10,000 Spaniards spread along the margin of the stream.

Anticipating the approach of the enemy, and desirous of observing the order of their march, Sir Arthur proceeded on the

27th to the Casa. He was accompanied by the officers of his staff and a few orderlies only; and all, except the orderlies, dismounting in the court yard, left their horses there, and ascended to the roof. It was not long before the French made their appearance, advancing in magnificent array, and by and by the heads of columns began to disappear among the woods. But the woods being filled with Spanish soldiers, no danger was apprehended; especially as not a single musket-shot spoke of a collision between them and the enemy. The whole was a delusion. The Spaniards, demoralised by their defeat a few days previously, fled at the first appearance of the enemy, and Sir Arthur and his staff suddenly beheld with astonishment clouds of French skirmishers hastening round the château. There was not a moment to be lost. Without uttering a word, the group turned, ran hastily downstairs, jumped into their saddles, and put spurs to their horses. A second surprise now appeared to take place, for the French, alarmed by the clatter of horses' feet behind them, opened to the right and left, and the English general, his staff, and orderlies galloped through. Fortunately some English infantry were not far off. A smart skirmish ensued, amid the tumult of which Sir Arthur returned unhurt to his position at Talavera. "It was an awkward predicament enough," the duke used to say, "but we had but one way out of it. We did not pick our steps, you may depend upon it, in running downstairs. The orderlies had behaved with perfect steadiness. They took no notice of what was passing outside, but sat upon their horses, holding ours. We were soon in the saddle, and then there was a general dash through the gateway, and high time it was. If the French had been cool, they might have taken us all; but the apparition of a body of horsemen in their rear seemed to frighten them; they opened out to the right and left, and we dashed through. Before they recovered their senses we were safe enough, though not, as you may suppose, in the best humour with the Valoroses, who had played us so shabby a trick."

In taking up his ground for the expected battle, Sir Arthur had stationed General Hill's division on his extreme left, placing it upon an eminence between which and the mountains ran a narrow valley, everywhere commanded by the English guns. The better to strengthen his centre, a redoubt had been begun, but it was still incomplete when the approach of the enemy became known. He contented himself therefore with placing behind it a division of English infantry, with a brigade of

English cavalry and some Spanish horsemen in support. Mackenzie's troops were intended, as they came in, to prolong the line to the right, and Campbell's division touched the Spaniards, and the enclosures which they held. The combined armies showed a total strength of 44,000 infantry, 10,000 cavalry, and 100 guns. But of this infantry and cavalry 19,000 only were English, the rest being Cuesta's undisciplined and ill-armed rabble. On the other hand, Victor, Sebastiani, and Joseph were at the head of 43,000 infantry, 7000 cavalry, and 90 guns, all well appointed, well drilled, homogeneous, and unaccustomed to defeat. The odds were terribly against the allies.

Driving Mackenzie's troops before him, Victor arrived, about two in the afternoon, in sight of the English position. He made no delay in attacking. The two French divisions which had been engaged at the Casa de Salinas took ground to the right and fell upon Hill with great fury, For a moment they seemed to prevail. Two German battalions, which formed part of this division, yielded to the shock, and the enemy crowned the summit of the hill. But they did not stand there long. General Sherbrook, whose division communicated by the left with that of Hill, wheeled round one of his brigades, which charged the French in flank and overthrew them. It was to no purpose that Victor repeatedly reinforced such of his troops as were engaged. Though renewing the attack more than once, and arriving more than once within a few yards of the summit, the French never reached it again, but after a fierce combat waged far into the night, were driven at the point of the bayonet back into the plain. Both hosts slept that night upon their arms. The French, well supplied, eat and drank before they lay down; the Spaniards likewise fared well; the English were starving. Throughout the two previous days no rations had been issued to them, except a handful of flour per man, so grossly forgetful of the engagements under which they had come were their Spanish allies. They were up, however, and in line long before dawn on the 28th, and just as the morning broke the battle was renewed. It raged furiously till noon, when a pause in the firing occurred, of which the troops on both sides took advantage to drink out of a rivulet which flowed between their positions. Meanwhile their leaders busied themselves in re-arranging their respective lines, and examining the dispositions of the enemy. And here an incident befell, which deserves notice, as testifying to the extraordinary coolness and self-

possession of Sir Arthur Wellesley. He was seated on the brow of an eminence whence the whole field of battle could be surveyed, when Colonel Donkin, the commander of a brigade which communicated directly with the Spaniards, rode up. He handed a letter to Sir Arthur, at the same time announcing that he had himself received it from the Duc del Albuquerque, and intimating that he was not unacquainted with its contents. They were of the most startling kind, for they announced that Cuesta was about to pass over to the enemy. Sir Arthur read the letter, put it into his pocket, and said in a calm, clear tone: "Very well, Colonel; you may go back to your brigade!" No more passed; no more was ever heard of the business. Whether Sir Arthur gave any credence to the story does not appear, but he acted as if it had been entirely devoid of truth. A rare instance of self-possession and self-confidence, looking, not alone to the nature of the intelligence conveyed, but to the source from whence it came.

About two o'clock the French renewed the attack, and till six the conflict was severe. At every point the assailants were repulsed, and again victors and vanquished rested upon their arms. But a sad accident befell. The dry grass and shrubs, with which the plain was covered, caught fire, and many wounded men, unable to crawl to a place of safety, perished amid the conflagration.

CHAPTER X

MOVES AGAINST SOULT—ACROSS THE TAGUS—IN LISBON—IN CADIZ—ACROSS THE TAGUS AGAIN

Sir Arthur had won a great battle, but his circumstances were scarcely improved by it. Upwards of 6000 British troops had been placed *hors de combat;* and though the loss of the enemy was still more severe, and though 3000 magnificent British infantry arrived in his camp just as the firing ceased, he could not venture, associated as he was with the Spaniards, to follow up his success. Joseph and Victor were thus enabled to retire unmolested from the field, the former pushing off for Madrid, which Sir Robert Wilson was reported to have threatened, the latter halting upon the left bank of the Alberche. Hence the armies which had fought on the 27th and 28th, continued to face one another on the 30th, and so remained till rumours came in, which led to a change of dispositions on the part of the English general.

I have elsewhere described the plan of campaign that was drawn up by Sir Arthur and accepted by the Spaniards. It broke down in every part. Venegas loitered by the way. Cuesta left the pass of Baños unguarded. Sir Robert Wilson failed to effect all that he had promised, and neither supplies nor means of transport were forthcoming. The evil consequences were made apparent first in the paralysis which fell upon the victors of Talavera, and next in the execution of certain movements by the enemy, which, had they been a little more prompt, might have led to serious results. Marshal Soult, after refitting at Lugo, advanced, as we have seen, to Salamanca. There the junction of Ney's corps, of which Mortier was in temporary command, put him at the head of 35,000 men, whom he moved leisurely, and with needless precaution, through the unguarded pass of Baños into the valley of the Tagus. On the evening of the 2nd of August, Sir Arthur heard of this movement. He held a conference with Cuesta, in which, after receiving the Spaniard's lame excuse for neglecting to occupy the pass, it was arranged that Cuesta should

remain in Talavera to guard the wounded, while Sir Arthur with his English troops countermarched to engage Soult. All this was done under the persuasion that Soult's force was, as the Spaniards represented it to be, barely 14,000 or 15,000 strong. For an encounter with 35,000, Sir Arthur was not prepared, particularly under circumstances which might at any moment bring Victor and Joseph upon his back.

Sir Arthur set out upon his bold enterprise on the morning of the 3rd. He reached Oropesa the same day, and there, for the first time, heard the truth respecting the enemy's strength. He was in a terrible scrape, and he knew it. If Soult could only secure the bridge over the Tagus at Almaraz, and Victor were to fall upon the Spaniards, and disperse them, his own chances of covering Lisbon, or even of saving the troops of which he was at the head, would be small indeed. If on the other hand he could get before Soult, break down the bridge and guard the fords, his retreat by Arzobispo into Estremadura, and through Estremadura into Portugal might be made good. It was an occasion which called for all the promptitude to decide, and the vigour of action, of which he was the master—and he did not fall below it. Though not unaware that Soult's advanced guard was considerably nearer than his own to the point in question, and that while the French followed a well-made road, the English would be obliged to scramble through rugged mountain passes, he directed General Craufurd with the light division to push for Almaraz, while he himself with the rest of the army turned round, and moved upon Arzobispo. Craufurd and his division did their work admirably. They passed the mountains, came down upon Almaraz, crossed the river, and completed the destruction of the bridge, just as the leading files of Mortier's cavalry appeared in sight. On that side at least the safety of the British army was secured.

Leaving them there, I return to Sir Arthur, who was pursuing his march towards Arzobispo, when he suddenly encountered the whole of Cuesta's troops, hurrying to overtake him. A somewhat stormy interview took place between the two chiefs. Sir Arthur charged Cuesta with again violating his pledges—Cuesta assured Sir Arthur that anxiety, lest the English should be overmatched in their combat with Soult, had alone induced him to quit Talavera. They parted in anger. Sir Arthur would not stay to fight in a position where victory itself could bring no benefit to the cause. Cuesta declared that he would accept battle from Soult, single-handed. But an interval of

twenty-four hours, in which the English made good their progress across the Tagus, sufficed to bring the old man to his senses. He also began, a little too late, his retreat in the same direction, and though he succeeded in getting the mass of his people over, it was by sacrificing his rear-guard, on which Soult fell, and from which he took thirty pieces of cannon.

While the Spaniards were thus mismanaging their affairs, Sir Arthur pursued his own course. He made for Deleytosa, where, during the 7th, 8th, and 9th, the scattered portions of his army re-assembled; and on the 11th he established his head-quarters at Jaraicejo, on the great road through Estremadura towards Badajoz and Lisbon. There he remained nine days, giving time for the Spaniards to come again into communication with him from Deleytosa; and occupying a line, which, with the bridges of Almaraz and Arzobispo broken, and the fords well guarded, was, for purposes of defence, excellent. For his eye was now fixed steadily on Portugal. He expected that the enemy, massing their force, would leave a single corps to protect Madrid, and march with the rest upon Lisbon; in which case he determined to resume the offensive, and to fight a battle at all hazards. Fortunately for him, and perhaps for Europe, the march upon Lisbon which Soult suggested, was not undertaken by King Joseph. Apparently satisfied with removing an immediate danger from himself, he broke up his army into portions; and Sir Arthur was, in consequence, enabled to fall back at his leisure upon Badajoz, in the villages round about which he placed his wearied troops.

Among all his campaigns perhaps there is not one in which, more remarkably than in this of Talavera, Sir Arthur Wellesley exhibited the several features of his grand military character; his prudence, not to call it deliberation, in preparing; his clear perception of the end to which his operations ought to be directed; his steady, rather than energetic, movements, in bringing them to a head; his skill in the selection of a defensive position; his wisdom in providing, as far as circumstances would allow, against contingencies; and the fortitude and energy with which, having got into a scrape, he managed to set himself free from it and to save his army. The delay at Abrantes was protracted to an extent which he himself deeply deplored. It prevented, beyond all doubt, the execution of the plan on which his heart was originally set. It enabled Victor to escape beyond the Tagus, and threw him back upon his resources. But Sir Arthur was not to blame for this. Indifferently supplied when

he began his march against Soult, he found himself, after the campaign of the Douro, all but destitute. His men were naked and shoeless; he lacked horses, mules, and carriages; he was without money, and his hospitals were crowded with sick. So ill indeed was he supported that supplies which ought to have reached him from Lisbon in a few days, did not come up for a fortnight. He heard also of reinforcements both of cavalry and infantry in the river, yet week after week passed by and they failed to make their appearance. At last he was compelled to move without them, trusting to the promises of the Spaniards for rations, which he had no means of carrying for himself. A less cautious commander would have probably made this move earlier; and it is possible that, without suffering more, he might have succeeded by a march up the right bank of the Tagus, in placing Victor between two fires. But this, looking to the sort of force with which he was about to co-operate, is by no means certain. Cuesta's army, as Sir Arthur soon discovered, was little better than a rabble. It could neither advance nor retire, except with precipitation; it was incapable of executing the simplest manœuvre in an enemy's presence. Had Cuesta brought it close to Victor's rear, and Victor turned upon it, the dispersion of the Spaniards would have been certain. And thus Sir Arthur must have found himself, with less than 20,000 men, in the air. Still there is no denying that his halt at Abrantes was too much prolonged, and that opportunities escaped him, in consequence, which never came again. But granting this, we grant all that in the campaign of Talavera can be asked for as a fault. His progress afterwards was as rapid as circumstances would allow; and his arrangements were excellent. Had the battle which he was anxious to fight been fought on the 23rd, Cuesta would have been in Madrid two days afterwards. And failing this, Wellesley's determination not to go beyond the position of Talavera was most judicious. Of his conduct during the trying days of the 26th and 27th it is unnecessary to speak. Cool, calm, self-possessed, he inspired everybody round him with perfect confidence, insomuch that among the troops, left as they were by the Spaniards to starve, not a murmur was heard. And finally, if in facing round upon Soult he exhibited more of courage than of prudence, let it never be forgotten, not only that Soult got into his rear, through the misconduct of those who ought to have barred the way against him, but that, in order to cloak their own blunders, some of these, in their reports to headquarters, greatly understated

the strength of the corps which had threaded the defile of Baños. As soon as he knew the truth Sir Arthur's proceedings were as vigorous as wisely conceived. It was a master's hand which pushed Craufurd through the mountains on Almaraz. It was the inspiration of genius which led to the oblique march upon Arzobispo, the descent by the left bank of the river and the occupation of Deleytosa and Jaraicejo. And when we further bear in mind, that the Spanish army was not only of no use, but a positive hindrance to him all the while, that the inhabitants as he passed along hid their provisions, and drove away their animals, we find ourselves at a loss which to admire the most,—the endurance of the men so circumstanced who kept together, in a state well nigh of starvation, or the skill and energy of their leader, who brought them out of such a complication of difficulties without losing a gun or leaving a single straggler behind.

The position which Sir Arthur had taken up near Badajoz enabled him to watch two points, both of the greatest importance. He was there upon one of the great roads to Lisbon which passes through Estremadura, and he could easily cross the Tagus and place himself on the other, should the enemy make his approach by the left bank of the river. At the same time he covered Cadiz, in which the central Junta, driven out of Madrid and Seville, had taken refuge. He retained that position therefore throughout the remainder of the summer, notwithstanding the malaria which infect the valley of the Guadiana, and the large amount of sickness, which partly on that account, partly as the natural result of over-exertion, fell upon his army. He availed himself likewise of his proximity to Lisbon and to Cadiz, and set off, as soon as the approach of winter freed him from the immediate apprehension of being molested, to visit both cities. The ostensible business which carried him to Lisbon was to confer with the English minister, and to press forward the recruitment and better organisation of the Portuguese levies. His real object was to select some position, the fortification of which might render the Portuguese capital secure; or, if the worst came, would enable the British army to withdraw unmolested from Portugal. For the state of Europe had painfully affected the minds of public men at home, and even he, resolute as he was, could not regard it with indifference. While therefore, in reply to questions addressed to him from London, he continued to assure the minister that the game was still alive in the Peninsula, he considered it necessary to provide against every possible contingency, and to make

such arrangements as should at once strengthen his hold upon the country, and enable him at any moment to quit it without loss or dishonour. It was under such circumstances, and with a view to the accomplishment of such objects, that the famous lines of Torres Vedras were marked out. And though the work went forward many months, Portuguese peasants executing what English engineers designed, so well was the secret kept, that neither in the French army nor in the English did any rumour get afloat that arrangements of the sort were in progress.

Having settled this point to his own satisfaction, he returned to headquarters, and after an interval of two days departed for Cadiz. Hitherto his brother, Lord Wellesley, had been accredited to the Spanish Government. He was now, in consequence of certain changes in the English administration, about to take charge of the Foreign Office at home, and the political views of the brothers being generally in accord, both felt that a personal interview would be desirable. They met accordingly, and the public service benefited for a while by what then passed between them. Nor was it with Lord Wellesley alone that Sir Arthur held confidential communication. The members of the Spanish Government waited upon him singly and in a body, and received, with apparent respect, the advice which he offered; and the advice which he offered was indeed worthy of all acceptation. He cautioned them against entertaining schemes of aggressive warfare. He pointed out that troops so imperfectly disciplined as theirs were unfit for the operations into which they were hurried, and could never be rendered efficient till time was taken to organise and drill them in positions comparatively safe. The chiefs of the Spanish Government appeared to be struck with the reasonableness of all his suggestions. They conferred on him the rank of Captain-General in the Spanish army. They fêted him in public and in private, and applauded to the echo the speech delivered in good Spanish, wherein he acknowledged the vote of thanks passed in his favour by the Junta. But they did not cast dust in his eyes for a moment. "You'll see what comes of all this," he observed to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, as they came away together from the meeting,—"these people will continue to believe that they are superior to the French; they will persist in fighting great battles as they have heretofore done, and one after another their armies will be destroyed."

It was at this time that Sir Arthur's brilliant services received their first public recognition at the hands of the sovereign. He

was raised to the British Peerage as Viscount Wellington of Wellington in Somersetshire. But the gratification thence arising was a good deal dimmed by the tidings of disaster which soon afterwards came in. The Spanish Government, which applauded while he spoke of defensive warfare, entered immediately on his departure from Cadiz on an offensive campaign. An attempt was made to reconquer Madrid, which ended in the defeat and dispersion of all the Spanish corps engaged in it. The consequence was that the whole course of the Tagus became uncovered, and Lisbon lay open to an attack against which he was unable from his position on the Guadiana to protect it. He broke up without hesitation and crossed the Tagus at Abrantes. There he stationed General Hill to observe the roads through Alemtejo, and to afford some show of protection to Badajoz; while he himself took post in Beira, having his left in Guarda, and his right in Viseu. Finally, the light division was thrown forward under Craufurd into the valley of the Coa, with orders to watch the course of the river, but to avoid unnecessary risks; on no account to be drawn into a battle, and to fall back when seriously threatened.

CHAPTER XI

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—FALL OF CIUDAD-RODRIGO AND ALMEIDA—BATTLE OF BUSACO, RETREAT TO THE LINES

In order to convey something like a correct idea of the nature of the struggle in which Lord Wellington was engaged, it will be necessary to interrupt for a moment the flow of my narrative, and to describe in few words how the belligerents stood in regard to the numbers and dispositions of the corps gathered under their respective standards.

The Spaniards, beaten everywhere, and re-assembling only to be dispersed again, could not show a muster-roll of more than 70,000 men in the whole. Twelve thousand were at Medellin in Estremadura, under the Duc del Albuquerque; 24,000, the remains of Ayerzago's corps, had come together at La Carolina; 20,000, or thereabouts, fugitives from del Parque's action on the Tormès, were at St. Martin de Trebejo, among the mountains of Sierre de Gaeta; and 6000 or 8000 with General Mahy, at Astorga and Villa Franca. Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz both contained adequate garrisons, and commanding the great roads through Estremadura and Beira, were, in the existing aspect of affairs, of the first importance. But these several Spanish corps, besides that they lay wide apart, had all, with the exception of Albuquerque's, suffered recent defeats. They were all in consequence too much demoralised to be depended upon for active operations, either offensive or defensive. Meanwhile the Portuguese army was fallen into a state well nigh of inefficiency. The campaign of the previous summer had shaken its discipline; the men were in rags, and their equipments terribly out of gear. About 15,000 of them who had latterly been in observation near Ciudad-Rodrigo, suffered so much from the refusal of the Spanish authorities to afford supplies, that it was found necessary to withdraw and send them to the rear. Hence the only force on which reliance could be placed was the British army, of which not more than 16,700 infantry and 2800 cavalry were really effective. With these, as has just been explained, Lord Wellington posted himself with his right in Guarda, and his left towards the Douro.

His advanced guard lay in the valley of the Coa, and General Hill, with an infantry division 4400 strong, remained at Abrantes, on the Tagus.

Looking next to the French, we find that they were in a condition to open the campaign with five well-appointed and highly-disciplined army-corps, not including Joseph's guard and the reserve. Soult, with 12,000 men, lay at Talavera, Sebastiani, Victor, Mortier, the Guards, and the reserve, were disposed about Madrid, and along the Tagus. They numbered in all about 65,000 men, and were, so to speak, in Lord Wellington's immediate front. But in addition to these, Ney was in Old Castile, with 32,000 men; Augereau in Catalonia, with 30,000; while Junot, with 27,000 more, was on his march through France towards the Pyrenees. He reached and crossed the mountains in January, 1810.

Here were odds enough against the British general, but more remains to be told. The campaign of Wagram had ended the war between France and Austria. Napoleon's marriage with the Archduchess seemed to secure him against further molestation on the side of Germany, and he was free at any moment to throw the whole military power of the empire into Spain. The British Government, on the other hand, had paralysed itself, and destroyed the finest army that ever quitted the English shores, amid the marches of Walcheren. Had the 40,000 men which composed that army been sent, as common sense might have suggested, to reinforce Lord Wellington, not the compaign of Talavera alone, but the war of which it was an episode, might have taken quite a different turn. But common sense entered little in those days into the military policy of Great Britain. Distrusting themselves, and harassed by an active opposition, the king's ministers were with difficulty dissuaded from abandoning the Peninsular contest altogether; indeed it was only the firmness of Lord Wellington which saved his country from that disgrace. To their inquiries, repeated over and over again, whether he believed it possible to maintain himself in Portugal, now that Spain was virtually conquered, his answers were on every occasion the same. "Give me such support as you can afford; men, guns, stores, and above all, money. Leave a fleet of transports in the Tagus to guard against the worst, and I will undertake to make my footing good; and if I can't do this, depend upon it that I will, when the proper time comes, bring off the army without loss and without discredit."

The duke's despatches are before the world, and all who read may understand how entirely upon him rested the burden of maintaining this most arduous struggle. And the struggle, be it remembered, was for a far higher issue than the mere deliverance of the Spanish Peninsula. It was the last effort of Europe to make head against a tyranny before which, up to that moment, principalities and powers had gone down; and the ebbs and flows which occurred in it, were felt in every town and village throughout the civilised world. A thousand questions arose out of it which Lord Wellington alone was assumed to be capable of answering, and to him appeals were continually made, by all who, for whatever reason, were interested in its results. Had he not been the most methodical, as well as the most industrious, of men, he never could have faced the amount of labour which each new day brought with it. But one of his great qualifications for command, perhaps not the least telling of the whole, was his rare skill in husbanding time. It may be truly said of him, when at the head of an army, that he never wasted an hour. He rose early, wrote letters and despatches till breakfast-time; saw the heads of departments then, and arranged with them the details of the day; then returning to his bedroom continued his general correspondence till two in the afternoon. Unless very hard pressed with business, he would then get upon horseback, and ride to the outposts, or wherever else he conceived that his presence might be necessary. At six he dined—almost always with guests more or less numerous round him; and at nine, or thereabouts, usually withdrew again to his own room. There he continued at his desk till midnight, discussing all that variety of topics which gives its peculiar interest to his public correspondence; and having done this, he slept. For he possessed the invaluable faculty of throwing off at pleasure anxieties and cares; and at any hour in the day or night, in any attitude, and in any situation, he could sleep when he pleased.

Lord Wellington's constitution was excellent, and he never overtaxed it by excesses. Temperate, rather than abstemious, both in eating and drinking, he had his wits always about him; and without apparent inconvenience could go as many as four-and-twenty hours at a time without tasting food. He knew, however, that such was not the case with men in general, and about no point was he more particular than that his troops should be regularly fed, and their food so dressed as to be at once nutritious and palatable. One of his orders of the day

directs that vegetables should be provided for the men wherever that was possible, and that the biscuits served out to them instead of bread should be boiled with their meat.

I shall take occasion to show by and by how, later in the war, he diversified this life of mental toil with field sports. Affairs had not as yet become so settled as to admit of that species of relaxation, but it was a principle with him to keep both body and mind up to their proper mark; and on that account he never omitted to give to each a due measure, both of the relaxation and of the exercise which it required. For the same reason he encouraged among his officers every pursuit which had a tendency to hinder them from becoming indolent. The only restriction which he laid upon shooting was, that gentlemen, fond of the sport, should be careful to pursue it as they would have done had they been in England. They were on no account to invade preserves without first obtaining the leave of the proprietor. They were as little as possible to injure fences. When the fashion came in of getting up plays and acting them, he gave to it every encouragement, and how he dealt with balls, the reader will learn in due time. All this, it will be observed, befell at times and seasons of comparative repose. When the armies were in the field, marching and fighting gave occupation enough to others, and kept him more continually in the saddle; yet even then his industry never relaxed; his correspondence was enormous.

So passed the winter of 1809-10. Early in the spring the French began to move. The bulk of their force they threw into Andalusia; Joseph, Victor, Mortier, and Sebastiani, all taking part in that expedition. Ney, with Junot close at hand to support him, faced Lord Wellington, while Soult, from his cantonments at Talavera, threatened Estremadura. It was the object of the march into Andalusia to surprise Cadiz, and had the enemy used proper diligence, they would have probably effected that object; but after dispersing the Spanish corps under Ayerzaga, they loitered by the way and so gave time for the Duc del Albuquerque to throw a portion of his army into Cadiz. Meanwhile Ney made such demonstrations as decided Lord Wellington not to risk anything in order to arrest Joseph in his movement. It might be of some importance to the Spaniards to keep the enemy at a distance from the place where their government carried on its deliberations; but Lord Wellington was fighting the battle, not of Spain, but of Europe, and his only chance of fighting it successfully depended upon his

being able to retain his hold upon Lisbon. He paid no attention, therefore, to Albuquerque and Ayerzaga's applications for support, but pressing forward the works at Torres Vedras, and employing upon them every peasant who could wield a spade or a pickaxe, he stood upon the defensive at Beira, waiting till the storm in his own immediate front should burst.

It was a maxim of the first Napoleon that war should support itself. Acting upon that principle, French armies everywhere, more especially in Spain and Portugal, took with them into the field only such a stock of provisions as each man was able to carry about with him for his own use. The practice had undoubtedly this to recommend it, that troops so little encumbered could move with extraordinary rapidity. It had, however, its disadvantages too, and upon the whole these were found generally to overbalance their opposites. Unless the march happened to be triumphant throughout, and the communications of the army with its rear were kept open, the men had nothing to depend upon after their cooked provisions were consumed, except such supplies as the country might afford. These sooner or later failed, and serious privations necessarily followed. Lord Wellington was fully alive to these facts, and upon them he grounded in the main his system of defence. He exacted from the Portuguese Government a promise that in the event of his being obliged to retire, the whole country between Beira and Torres Vedras should be laid waste. The retreat he undertook to conduct so leisurely that time would be afforded for executing that stern purpose. But the purpose itself was on no account to be evaded, the work of desolation must be complete. Not a head of cattle, not a grain of corn, not a morsel of food nor a flask of wine, must anywhere be left for the enemy to profit by. Every mill, likewise, was to be burned down, and every house emptied of its contents. Meanwhile he could so arrange that the enemy should find it as difficult to communicate with their rear, as to go forward; and Portugal would be saved, not more by the resistance offered in the field than by the impossibility of living where all means of subsistence were taken away. Nothing short of what he owed to Portugal and to Europe could have induced Lord Wellington to fall upon this terrible device. It would have been unnatural had either the Portuguese Government or the Portuguese people acceded to it willingly. The latter contemplated with dismay the loss of all which seemed to make life valuable to them; the former urged the commander of their armies to keep the war, if possible, from

falling into so hideous a course; and well-disposed was he to act upon the suggestion as long as it was possible so to do. By sending General Hill towards Badajoz, he frustrated the designs of Soult, who had moved from Talavera against that place, and by and by, when Ney took the field, threatening Ciudad-Rodrigo, he pushed Crauford and the light division across the Coa, and restrained him. But Napoleon, though kept at home by the attractions of his Austrian bride, did not entirely forget the Peninsula and its requirements. He sent Massena, by far the ablest of his marshals, to assume the command of what was called the army of Portugal, and both sides soon felt and acknowledged the vigour of the hand which had undertaken the direction of affairs. It is said of Massena that he accepted the command with reluctance. He had acquired in the Italian wars a great name, which must now be jeopardised; for he dreaded alike the impracticable tempers of his brother marshals, and the renown of Lord Wellington. But he could not decline so important a trust, and he came.

The army of Portugal when Massena assumed the command consisted of the corps of Ney and Junot, numbering between them 57,000 effective men. Its head-quarters were established and a large magazine formed at Salamanca in the month of May, and on the 1st of June it broke up, and moved forward to invest Ciudad-Rodrigo. Great alarm was felt for the safety of that place; and anxiety expressed both by the Spanish and Portuguese Governments, that Lord Wellington should risk a general action in order to prevent the siege. But Lord Wellington knew better than all the world besides what he could and what he ought to do. Calmly, and with the dignity which became his position, he refused to be diverted from his own purposes. He wrote, indeed, to General Mahey, urging him to harass from Galicia the enemy's communications, but he wrote in vain; and he himself advanced as far as Almeida, whence he continued, after the place had been attacked, to throw supplies across the river into Ciudad-Rodrigo. But further than this he would not go. "I should be neglectful of my duty to the king, to the prince regent, and to the common cause, if I could permit myself to be influenced by public clamour, or by fear, so as to modify the system of operations which I have adopted after mature deliberation, and which daily experience proves to be the only one which can bring the matter to a successful issue." The writer of this letter looked far beyond the objects which engrossed the attention of other men. They thought of things

present, he of distant results; they dreaded the loss of a town and the momentary forfeiture of prestige, he considered how most surely a great war might be carried on and brought to a successful issue. There is but one parallel in history to firmness like this, a thousand times more rare than the sort of courage which prompts men to face personal danger without flinching. "If you be a great general," said Scylla to Marius, "come and fight me." "If you be a great general," said Marius to Scylla, "compel me to fight you."

Massena was too much master of his art not to desire what Lord Wellington declined to afford. He tried every possible expedient to tempt the English army into an aggressive movement, and then, failing to accomplish that end, he pressed the siege. His first parallel was opened in the night between the 15th and 16th of June, and on the 11th of July the place surrendered. Meanwhile General Mortier, who commanded a corps of Soult's army at Merida, moved towards the Tagus, and was followed by Hill. The two, marching upon parallel lines, crossed the river almost at the same time, and on the 18th faced one another in Lower Beira; while in Upper Beira the main armies stood like pieces on a chess-board, waiting till the minds of the players should be made up in regard to their game.

The fall of Ciudad-Rodrigo inflicted a severe wound on Spanish pride, and vehemently the English general was blamed for it. He cared little for censure which he knew to be undeserved, but adverse events began to multiply upon him and to try his temper. General Craufurd, who lay with a single division in advance of the Coa, suffered himself to be drawn into a battle, and with difficulty escaped across the river. He handled his men well in the face of tremendous odds, but his combat was a mistake, and might have been attended with fatal consequences. Then followed the forward movement of the whole French army, before which Lord Wellington retired, and by and by Almeida was invested. Lord Wellington had taken great pains to strengthen and supply the place. Portuguese troops formed the garrison, with an English officer at their head, and he (Colonel Cox), equally with his chief, counted on being able to hold out for many weeks. But both had deceived themselves. On the 15th of August the trenches were opened, on the 26th a shell exploded a powder magazine, and on the 28th the garrison mutinied, and insisted upon opening the gates. And so 5000 unwounded men laid down their arms without striking a blow.

The loss of Almeida under such circumstances was a catastrophe on which Lord Wellington had never counted. It seriously deranged his plans, for he had determined to attack Massena while busy with the siege, and if he could not save the place, at all events to carry off the garrison. Massena, on the contrary, gained by his conquest what he was already beginning to need, a supply of provisions, and an excellent base of future operations. It can hardly be said that he made the most of these advantages, for, carried away as it would seem with the desire to possess himself of the English depôts at Coimbra also, he crossed the Mondego at Celerico, and took the road to Viseu. Meanwhile Lord Wellington, retiring upon Alva, there gathered in all his detachments, and anticipating his pursuers, marched into the position of Busaco. It is a range of precipitous heights, intersected here and there with valleys, through one of which runs the road from Viseu to Coimbra, and it extends from right to left about four English miles, having a convent on one flank and a village on the other. There he determined to make a stand. His own troops were beginning to murmur because their general appeared to distrust them, and the Portuguese Government had but imperfectly fulfilled his wish in making a desert of the country in his rear. Now it was to this more than to success in the field that he trusted for saving Portugal, and it was of the utmost consequence that the work of devastation should be done by the Portuguese themselves. For these two reasons, therefore, in order to raise the spirits of his own men, and to gain a day or two in which the Portuguese authorities might perform what they had undertaken to do, he resolved to accept a battle, should Massena, as he fully expected, commit the mistake of delivering one.

When all were assembled, including Hill's corps, and a Portuguese division which had guarded the passes of the Tagus, Lord Wellington was able to bring into line about 50,000 men. Massena, reinforced by Mortier, had under his orders rather more than 70,000, and if Napoleon's directions had been followed, Soult, with 30,000 more, would have been by this time through Estremadura, threatening Lisbon from the left of the Tagus. But Soult, affecting to consider the reduction of Cadiz as his proper work, paid no heed to Napoleon's instructions, and escaped thereby the mortification of serving under a rival whom he hated. Seventy thousand against 50,000 were, however, long odds, and Massena, looking at the composition of the two hosts, counted upon them as more than enough to

render victory secure. Accordingly after some delay, which told in Lord Wellington's favour, he launched his masses on the 27th against the English position. His order of battle was not good. He attacked in two heavy columns so arranged that they were unable to support one another; and each, before it found time to deploy, was crushed by the fire of the English line. The results seem never for a moment to have been doubtful. The French were beaten at all points, and slept that night at the foot of a ridge, in attempting to carry which they had lost between 4000 and 5000 men.

Lord Wellington fought this battle, not unaware that the ground on which he had planted himself could be turned by the left. The same idea appears to have presented itself to Massena's mind after the battle had begun, and the report of a cavalry patrol assured him next day that he could pass safely through a defile on his right into the great Lisbon road, midway between Coimbra and Oporto. He made arrangements to take advantage of the circumstance; and as soon as darkness closed in on the 28th, struck into the defile. The movement would have cost the enemy dear had Lord Wellington's orders been properly obeyed. For he had instructed Colonel Trant to block the mouth of the defile with a body of Portuguese militia. But Trant, misled by false intelligence, had deviated from his instructions, and failed to arrive within sight of his proper post till after the head of the French column had taken possession of it. The blunder might have led to serious results had a less far-seeing general been compromised by it. But in the present instance no great harm arose. A glance over the ground where the enemy had bivouacked on the 28th showed Lord Wellington, on the morning of the 29th, how the case stood, and without a moment's delay or hesitation, he put his army in full march to the rear. There was no hurry, no confusion, no dismay, yet the scene was throughout as melancholy as it was striking. In front of Lord Wellington's columns the great mass of the population moved, carrying with them such goods as they were able to transport, and destroying the rest. Men, women, and children were there with cattle and sheep urged onwards at their utmost speed, till the country in rear of the troops, when they looked back upon it, became as it were a desert. On the 8th of October, having been little pressed and seldom engaged except with his cavalry, Lord Wellington entered the lines.

CHAPTER XII

LINES OF TORRES VEDRAS

The force which Lord Wellington carried with him into the lines amounted to 50,000 men. The arrival not long afterwards of 5000 English, and as many Spanish infantry, raised it to 60,000, a considerable army, doubtless, had it been trustworthy in all its parts; yet, even in that case, by no means too large, for the position which it was called upon to hold. But the Portuguese were still far inferior to what they afterwards became, and on Romana's Spaniards, the wreck of a beaten host, little reliance could be placed. Massena followed close with 55,000, all that remained of the 70,000 with which he had opened the campaign. His astonishment, when he beheld the formidable chain of works which barred his onward progress, it would be difficult to describe. Till that moment he had never heard that works of any sort were begun. He expected that before evacuating the country Lord Wellington would risk another battle, and assuming that the battle would be fought upon a fair field, he entertained no misgivings as to the result. The apparition, therefore, of a redoubt on every height, of streams dammed and abbatis laid down, struck him with dismay. Perhaps, indeed, if he had not suffered so severely in the battle of Busaco, the lines as they were at that moment might have been held in less respect; for they were very far indeed from being what in the course of the winter they became. But the memory of recent disaster was too fresh to permit of his incurring out of hand the risk of a similar calamity. So he halted, put his troops into position, reconnoitred, and threw away his only chance of success.

From that date up to the middle of November the two armies continued to face one another. The English, supplied from the fleet, fared upon the whole well; the French soon began to experience the terrible effects of Lord Wellington's policy. Carrying no stores with them, they ate up in a day or two all the provisions that could be found in the neighbourhood of the camp, and were driven to collect supplies from a distance.

Whole battalions were employed in that demoralising service, with, however, but indifferent success. Then the horses began to die for lack of forage, and the men, ill fed and worse clothed, crowded the hospitals. Meanwhile swarms of partisans gathered in their rear. Their convoys were attacked, their foraging parties harassed, their communications with Spain interrupted, till their brave and skilful chief was forced in the end to acknowledge that the anticipations of evil which had haunted him when first approaching the enterprise, were more than realised.

Though the English army enjoyed all this while as much repose as is consistent with service in the field, it may be doubted whether their leader was ever exposed to greater annoyance from the vacillations of his own government, and the exceeding short-sightedness, not to use a stronger term, of the governments of the two Peninsular nations. In London, and indeed throughout England generally, the gloomiest anticipations were formed. Nobody could believe that a handful of men, forced into a corner within twenty miles of Lisbon, would be able many days to hold its ground against the united strength of the French Empire; for the emperor had at that moment no other war upon his hands, and it was difficult to believe that any exertion would be considered too great for the expulsion of the English from Portugal. Indeed so deeply were the British ministers impressed with this belief, that Lord Liverpool then Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, wrote to say, that "the re-embarkation of the army would probably begin about September." The Portuguese Government, on the other hand, became clamorous for the resumption of offensive operations. They denounced the retreat to Torres Vedras as an act of treason, and found the people whose houses had been burned and their property destroyed, willing enough to believe that protection from the English was as intolerable as submission to the French. Lord Wellington's correspondence shows how severely the weakness of the English and the wickedness of the Portuguese cabinets tried him. For not the least curious incident in a series of mistakes was this, that the same minister who spoke of a speedy retreat from the continent pressed the British general to lessen the expenses of the war, by sending home the transports without which retreat would be impossible.

If the Portuguese Regency had gone no further than to heap censure on his plan of campaign, Lord Wellington could have afforded to treat their arrogance with contempt; but when he found that with a view to embarrass him, the Portuguese

troops were starved, he considered it necessary to speak out. He wrote to Brazil, complaining to the king of the misconduct of his representatives, and threatened the regency with withdrawing from the country unless they treated him better. As to the Spanish Government, he had long learned that reasoning and remonstrance were alike unavailing in that quarter. Undisciplined mobs were still thrust into situations where they were powerless to effect anything, till by and by Spanish armies, properly so called, ceased to exist. Certainly Lord Wellington's prospects were at this time, in all men's eyes except his own, desperate. He himself never lost heart. "With the sea open to me," he used to write, "and tonnage enough in the Tagus, I can never be in much danger. Every day that we can manage to hold our own in this country, is an immense gain to us, and a great loss to the enemy, for Europe won't bear the oppression with which it is treated for ever, and the first serious check which Buonaparte meets with, will give the signal for a general rising against him. It is not very generous of the ministers to throw the responsibility of continuing the war upon me; that is what the government ought to bear, whose servant I am; but I don't care, I am ready to take it, as they will have it so, and have no fear about the result."

Perhaps the greatest inconvenience which Lord Wellington suffered at that time, arose from his want of money. Nations which wage war as England does, and let us hope that she will never be induced to change her system, expect that their troops will pay for all that they require, even in an enemy's country; and the rule is doubly binding when they operate among friendly people. But the English Government is apt to forget that there is no possibility of adhering to this system, if the military chest be empty. "I do not," wrote Lord Wellington to Lord Liverpool, "receive one-sixth part of the money which is required to keep so great a machine in motion." "I cannot get on unless more money is sent." "I am in debt to everybody, and cannot command the commonest necessaries, unless I follow the example of the enemy, and take what I require with the strong hand." But this manner of proceeding, besides being entirely opposed to his own sense of right, would have proved to him, as it did to the French, a source of the gravest inconvenience. He therefore set himself to remedy the evil as well as he could; and by establishing a sort of paper currency, and encouraging American ships to bring corn into the Tagus, he managed to keep his army, and even the inhabitants of

Lisbon, supplied at a time when, but for his exertions, they must have equally starved.

Another subject gave a good deal of annoyance to Lord Wellington at this time. The Spanish colonies in South America had long desired to open a direct trade with England, and English merchants, indifferent as they are apt to be to other considerations than those of their own interests, encouraged the colonists in that disposition. By little and little, an illicit free trade led to colonial revolt, and then the question between Spain and England became complicated. Lord Wellington's views of the case were as just as they were liberal. He deprecated at such a moment the tacit sanction which his own government had given to what the laws of the Spanish monarchy forbade, while he resisted the demand of the Spanish Regency, that England should co-operate with them in putting down the insurrection. "Whatever," he says, "may be the relations which are ultimately established between Spain and her colonies, the general result must be to diminish, if not to extinguish, the foreign commerce of the Peninsula, a circumstance from which it is certain that Great Britain alone can profit. Neither can it be doubted that the colonies may separate from the mother country at any moment they please. It will be an act of madness, therefore, in Spain, if she seek to hinder that separation by force, and it will be equally foolish in England to second, or even to encourage, such an attempt. The latter, however, may, by her influence and advice, prevent matters from arriving at this extremity, but she should attempt nothing more than to dissuade Spain from having recourse to violence."

In dealing with these questions, and others which arose out of them, such as the national antipathy between the Portuguese and the Spaniards, and the impatience of his own government for action in some shape or another, Lord Wellington's mind was kept continually on the stretch. More than once he seems to have arrived at the conclusion that, in order to stop the mouths of the opposition at home, and of his enemies in Portugal, it would become necessary to assume the offensive. His better judgment, however, prevailed, and he abstained from risking a battle. His reasoning, as expressed in various letters to the government at home, was this:—"I have no doubt, as matters stand at present, that I am strong enough to beat the French. But by exposing my troops, at this inclement season, to the rains for even three days and nights, I

am sure to bring sickness among them. My gain will be that by defeating Massena and Soult I shall free both the northern provinces and Andalusia from the presence of the French. But this it is probable that I shall effect in the common course of events, without risking the loss of a battle, which would compromise us altogether. Besides, looking to what occurred after the last campaign, I do not see that our condition will be materially bettered by the evacuation of these provinces. When Castile and the north of Spain were freed from French troops, they did not raise a man or strike a blow for the common cause. If all this be true, our interests do not require that we should fight the French army, which we should certainly not be able to drive out of the Peninsula; but that we should give as much occupation as possible to the largest portion of that army, and leave offensive operations to be carried on by the guerillas. So long as the French do not threaten our means of subsistence, or the resources of the Portuguese Government, or anything else which affects our security, it is a matter of indifference to us whether they remain in Spain or Portugal. I believe, indeed, looking to the increased difficulties which they experience in subsisting themselves in the latter country and keeping open their communications, that it is of advantage to us that they should remain where they are. Their numbers diminish from day to day; they do us no harm; we are nearer to our supplies than we have ever yet been; and all the north of Spain is open to the operations of the guerillas."

The soundness of this reasoning could not be called in question, and there was additional ground for remaining on the defensive in the considerations, first, that the Portuguese troops were as yet imperfectly disciplined, and, next, that his attack, if made at all, must be made without artillery. For the enemy's position was, in this respect, as good as his own. Both were alike inaccessible to guns; while victory itself would have carried the conquerors only into a country utterly exhausted. The single contingency, indeed, which Lord Wellington in his lines had reason to dread, was the junction of Soult with Massena; and even in that case he believed himself strong enough to keep both at bay. He therefore restrained the ardour of his men, wrote cheerfully to his own government, compelled the Portuguese Regency to observe at least the appearance of moderation, and bided his time.

CHAPTER XIII

MASSENA'S RETREAT—FUENTES D'HONORE

Massena had borne up with wonderful patience against the difficulties of his situation for more than two months. He held on amid sickness and want, in the hope either that Soult would come to his assistance from Andalusia, or that Foy, whom he had sent to Paris with information for the emperor, would return and bring with him fresh instructions. Neither event befell, and yielding to a necessity which could no longer be resisted, he changed his ground. He could not, indeed, venture as yet to abandon the enterprise upon which he had been thrust. He had no longer the faintest hope of succeeding, but a retreat into Spain without positive orders from Napoleon was a step which he was reluctant to take. He contented himself, therefore, with falling back to Santarem; and throwing a bridge over the Zezere at Punhete, re-opened his communications with Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo. This he managed to effect about the middle of November, though not without incurring great hazard, for his troops were led of necessity through various defiles, amid the entanglement of which a contest would have been very disastrous. But Lord Wellington, seeing the enemy in the toils, abstained from attacking him. He had, after mature deliberation, formed his own plan, and the prospect of an immediate and partial success was insufficient to draw him away from it. Wherefore, following Massena at a respectful distance, and satisfying himself that it was the enemy's intention to linger on where they halted, he fell back again and resumed his old position.

So passed the winter of 1810. Lord Wellington would risk nothing, Massena could attempt nothing. The former continued to strengthen his lines, and threw up a new chain of works on the further side of the Tagus. The latter devoted all his time and energies to provide common necessaries for the troops of which he was at the head. By and by, on the 5th of February, General Foy re-entered the camp with intelligence that no help was to be expected from France. Misunderstandings had arisen between

Napoleon and the Emperor of Russia, and Napoleon was already preparing for that march into the North of Europe which he soon afterwards began. Here, then, was the fulfilment of Lord Wellington's prophecy, often repeated, yet nowhere believed. It was the continued resistance of the Peninsular nations which encouraged Alexander to withstand the demands of Napoleon; it was from the camp fires of the English army, as it lay through that long winter on the hills of Torres Vedras, that the torch was carried which set Northern Europe in a flame. Had Lord Wellington been less firm than he was, the feeble government which he served would have withdrawn him from the Peninsula; and with the final abandonment of their cause by the English the resistance of the Peninsular nations would have ceased. There would have been no Russian war in that case, nor, as far as human sagacity can discover, any chance of freedom for continental Europe during the lifetime of the French Emperor.

Cut off by this information from all hope of support elsewhere, Massena derived small comfort from the assurance that Soult, Drouet, and Dorsenne, had received peremptory orders to concentrate round him. He knew too well the tempers of his brother marshals to expect hearty co-operation from them, and he was right. Soult refused to march upon Abrantes. He yielded, indeed, so far to the will of his master as to convert the siege of Cadiz into a blockade, and to carry 15,000, instead of 30,000, men into Estremadura. And there he loitered to disperse the bands of Ballasteros and Mendizabel; to reduce Merida and Olivença, and to lay siege to Badajoz. But he never brought a man into communication with Massena, nor ever intended so to do. Drouet and Dorsenne in like manner came up slowly, and brought no supplies with them. Joseph alone marched briskly upon Alcantara, but no good arose out of the movement. Long before the feasibility of Napoleon's plan could be tested, Massena's powers of endurance gave way, and that retreat began of which it is not too much to say that it decided the issues of the great war in the Peninsula. I must leave the historian to describe in detail how this retreat was conducted. It began on the evening of the 4th of March, and continued without a pause till the 16th. So far as military skill was concerned it was admirably managed. The duke often spoke of it afterwards, as fully bearing out the great reputation which Massena had acquired elsewhere. "I could never catch him napping. Wherever I least desired him to be, there he surely was, and he chose his ground so well that it always cost

time, which in such cases is invaluable, to dislodge him. He made excellent use of his cavalry too, in which he was strong, and once employed a portion of it—the only occasion, by the way, in which I ever saw the dragoon put to his legitimate use—as infantry. But the dismounted dragoons made a poor fight of it. They tried to keep a wooded hill not far from Alcobaça, and a few companies of the Rifle Brigade, the old 95th, you know, soon drove them away. I never had much idea of the dragoon while we had him in our own service, and after the exhibition which he made of himself at Alcobaça, I certainly should not like to see him re-introduced among us."

It was not till the 6th, when he cautiously entered Santarem, that Lord Wellington became convinced that Massena was in full retreat. As soon as that fact became plain to him, he despatched a messenger to Badajoz, urging the governor to hold out to the last extremity, and assuring him of speedy relief. And a stout column, under the orders of Marshal Beresford, crossed the Tagus on the 8th, and marched towards the beleaguered town. But Don José de Imar, the Governor of Badajoz, proved to be a traitor. On the 10th tidings reached him from Elvas that Beresford was at hand, and on the 11th, before a practicable breach had been effected, he opened his gates. This cruel act proved, both in its immediate and more remote consequences, extremely inconvenient to Lord Wellington. It exposed Marshal Beresford to great danger, which he escaped only through Soult's mistake, in breaking up the besieging army prematurely; it cost many valuable lives later in the season to repair the mischief which had been done. Lord Wellington, however, as he knew nothing of the treason while it was hatching, so he did not permit the news of its consummation to interfere with his arrangements. He continued the pursuit of Massena, fighting him at Pombal, at Redinha, and again at Fonz d'Arunce, where on the 16th he was compelled, through failure of stores of every kind, to halt till his supplies could overtake him.

If the French behaved gallantly as soldiers during this retreat, their conduct as men cannot be sufficiently reprobated. It seemed, indeed, as if from the date of their entrance into Portugal, they had ceased to think as well as to act like human beings. No doubt the devastation of the country through which they advanced astonished and enraged them, and for excesses committed when driven to seek for food at the point of the bayonet, some faint excuse may be urged; but

their wanton outrages in every town and village, their brutal conduct to the women, their slaughter of men and even of infants, stand without a parallel in the records of crime. Not content with plunder, arson, murder, they seemed to take a savage delight in leaving traces of their guilt behind. The very wells they poisoned by casting into them the bodies of the slain, and into many ovens which our men opened in search of bread, they found that dead bodies had been thrust.

Lord Wellington's compulsory halt, which lasted several days, enabled Massena to get his broken masses into something like order. He took up a position on the further side of the Guarda mountains, whence he had it in his power either to connect himself with Joseph by moving towards Alcantara, or to continue his retreat upon Ciudad-Rodrigo. He was thus circumstanced when, on the 29th, the English threading the passes of the hills showed themselves in full march to attack him. He did not await the onset. The Coa was in his rear, he crossed it, and at Sabugal was brought to action. Through some mismanagement on the part of the English he contrived to slip away, and to escape, with the loss of the whole of his artillery, first to Ciudad-Rodrigo, and by and by to Salamanca.

With Almeida and Ciudad-Rodrigo both in the enemy's hands, the position of the English army on the Portuguese frontier was no longer what it used to be. Badajoz, likewise, instead of protecting, menaced them from the side of Estremadura. Indeed Lord Wellington felt that, before anything further could be done, he must recover these places, let the cost of life be what it might. With regard to Almeida, and even to Ciudad-Rodrigo, he had good hope. The first was known to be so ill supplied, that a fortnight's blockade would suffice to reduce it; the last, it was understood, had been pretty well emptied of provisions by Massena's troops, as they swept through it. Lord Wellington, therefore, effected the investment of Almeida with one division, and with the rest of the army crossed the Coa, and threatened Ciudad-Rodrigo. Massena, however, had been too much on the alert to leave these places at the enemy's mercy. His first act after reaching Salamanca was to send supplies to Ciudad-Rodrigo, which arrived on the very day that the English passed the Coa. A halt was accordingly ordered, and for a brief space the French and English armies rested from their labours.

There was rest for others, there was none for Lord Wellington. Unsatisfactory tidings came in from the further side of the

Tagus. Beresford, after defeating a French division at Campo Major, had been drawn into a false position on the Guadiana, and was in danger. On the 14th of April Lord Wellington mounted his horse at Villa Formosa. He arrived at Beresford's head-quarters on the 17th; on the 18th he put the corps in march towards Badajoz; and on the 20th he was at Elvas taking account of the resources which it could furnish. The 22nd saw him, in company with Beresford, closely reconnoitring the fortress, and arranging a plan of siege; and on the 25th he was back again on the frontiers of Castile, where his presence was sorely needed. Generally speaking Lord Wellington's intelligence proved better than that of the French throughout the war. At this particular juncture the enemy seems to have had many spies in the English camp, and the departure of Lord Wellington, as well as the route which he had taken, were immediately communicated to Marshal Massena. He believed that an opportunity was afforded of relieving Almeida, and he hastened to take advantage of it. The rapidity with which the French refitted after every disaster, deserves the highest praise. Soult, escaping from Oporto, was in a condition to take the field again within a fortnight, and Massena had already collected at Salamanca, men, horses, and guns, which rendered him superior to the English in cavalry by three to one, and in infantry by not less than two to one. If, with such odds in his favour, he could bring the English to action, especially during the absence of their great chief, there seemed no reason to doubt that he should overthrow them. And whether overthrowing them or not, he should certainly be able to revictual Almeida, and put it out of danger. But Massena had not reckoned upon the rapidity with which Lord Wellington travelled. A succession of heavy rains, likewise, swelled the rivers, and rendered the roads all but impassable. It was the 30th of April, therefore, before he could reach Ciudad-Rodrigo, and only on the 2nd of May the Agueda was crossed. It was too late. Lord Wellington, with 28,142 infantry, and 1631 cavalry, took post upon some strong ground, having the Dos Casos with its steep banks in its front, and the Tormès with its banks equally steep in his rear. His left rested on Fort Conception, his right upon the boggy woods of Pozzo Bello. Massena saw that the convoy which he was conducting could not possibly be introduced into Almeida without a struggle. He did not decline the challenge. On the 3rd he attacked the village of Fuentes d'Honore, an advanced work, so to speak, in the English centre, and failing to carry it, threw

himself, on the 5th, with great fury upon the boggy wood. A desperate conflict ensued. The English, borne back by superior numbers, changed their whole order of battle, and repelled over and over again every effort to break through them. Night put an end to the firing, and it was spent by the English in throwing up field-works. Hence, when the morning of the 6th broke, Massena shrank from renewing the contest. He felt that the purpose of his forward movement had been defeated. The provisions which he was escorting for the benefit of the garrison of Almeida his own people had consumed, and the means of procuring more, even for present use, were wanting. He contented himself, therefore, with getting instructions conveyed to General Brennier, who commanded in the beleaguered fortress, to fight his way out of it, after destroying the works; and then marched away, recrossing the Agueda, and returning to his old quarters at Salamanca.

General Brennier duly received Marshal Massena's instructions, and acted upon them skilfully and bravely. He had before him a good officer too; but General Campbell's pickets appear to have been less on the alert than became them, for about midnight on the 16th, the enemy broke through them, and pushed rapidly for the Agueda. At the same time a loud explosion announced that the fortifications of Almeida were blown up, and a scene of something like confusion followed. The blockading troops turned out, and followed the enemy, skirmishing with their rear. They could not succeed, however, in bringing them to a stand, and by and by 1400 French infantry passed the river at the Barca del Puerca, and were safe with the 2nd French corps, which lay on the opposite side to receive them.

It was not, however, in Beira alone that hostilities went forward briskly at this time. Marshal Beresford, it will be recollected, had been left by Lord Wellington in Estremadura to overawe Soult and to besiege Badajoz. Blake and Castaños lay at Val Verde, having under their orders about 17,000 ill-armed and undisciplined Spaniards. With these Beresford communicated, and having completed his investment between the 4th and the 8th of May, he began to arm his batteries. They were indifferently supplied, and worse served, for the guns were few in number, and recruits, chiefly Portuguese, worked them. The siege made, therefore, but little progress, and by and by the advance of Soult at the head of 20,000 men caused it to be suspended. The guns were removed to a place of safety; troops

enough were left in the trenches to maintain the blockade, and Beresford, with the rest, marched out to meet the enemy. He was joined on the 15th at Albuera, by Blake and Castaños, and early next morning was attacked by Soult. Little generalship was displayed on either side. The Spaniards soon abandoned the high ground on which they had been placed; the English and Portuguese were in the greatest jeopardy, when the arrival of the fusilier brigade, which came up at a critical moment from Badajoz, saved the day. These brave men, charging in an echelon of lines, overwhelmed the enemy with their fire, who after repeatedly attempting, but in vain, to deploy, abandoned the field. It was dark when the battle ended, and French and English slept where they had fought, but when morning dawned the French had disappeared. Fifteen hundred English infantry, all that remained out of 7000, stood victorious on the heights which they had won.

Among all his campaigns there was not one about which the duke, when led on to discuss it, spoke with greater animation than this. Not that he ever said much about his own difficulties, so far as these were occasioned by the neglect of the government which he served. To the last day of his life, indeed, he seemed to treat matters of this sort as if they had been state secrets; for whenever his friends alluded by chance to the shortcomings of ministers, he invariably turned the subject, and that with a degree of tact as well as generosity which was very remarkable. For example, it happened one day at Walmer Castle, that a gentleman present referred indignantly to the Walcheren expedition, regretting that the fine army wasted upon it had not been sent to the North of Portugal. "So you think," was the duke's answer, "but how should I have been able to feed them? I had difficulty enough in feeding the small force already there, what should I have done if it had been trebled?" In the same spirit he would either set aside or account for the perverse doings of the Portuguese Regency. "They could not see things in the same light that I did; they were naturally looking to the salvation of their own country; I had to provide for the continuance of a great war; and the Portuguese are not constitutionally a very energetic people. Yet their infantry became good, they were quite equal to our sepoys, and, like the sepoys, fought best when mixed with English troops, and commanded by English officers." Even for the Spaniards he had always a kind word to say. "What could you expect from men without discipline, or what of a nation without a govern-

ment? Thoughts were at one time entertained of trying to do with them what we had done with the Portuguese, but the plan was impracticable from the first. Had the regency listened to the proposal, which they never did, the pride of a great nation would have rebelled against it. I made the experiment of enlisting some of them, and intermixing them in the ranks with our men, but that failed too. They could not endure the restraints of our discipline, and deserted on the first opportunity. What the Spanish armies wanted was officers. The men were active, sober, patient, and brave, but they never became such soldiers as could be trusted by themselves. Towards the end of the war they improved a good deal, but in 1811 they were quite worthless."

"Was not Romana a good officer?"

"Well, Romana might have been a good officer if he had had health, but he was in a rapid decline when he brought the wreck of his army into the lines, and died soon afterwards."

"You had a high opinion of Massena, had you not?"

"Certainly, he was by far the ablest of Buonaparte's marshals that I had anything to do with. He made mistakes, as all men are liable to do, particularly in his pursuit of me from Guinaldo; but his dispositions in front of the lines were admirable, and his retreat was a masterpiece. His great blunder was in facing me so long as he did. He might have seen from the first that he could not touch me, not even if he had got Soult and Joseph to co-operate with him.

"The only real danger to me was from the sea; and I have often wondered that Buonaparte did not make a desperate effort to gain the command of the estuary of the Tagus. There were, to be sure, nine chances to one against his succeeding. But the game which he played was worth risking even these odds to win. If by a sudden burst he could have got possession of the Tagus, and kept it for a week, we must have starved. However, I had pretty well provided against that also. We had heavy batteries which commanded the roadstead; and Belem and the other forts were well armed."

"The French must have suffered fearfully at that time."

"I can't conceive how they existed at all. They never carried supplies with them beyond the four or five days' provisions with which each man was provided. And the country for miles round was a desert. At least, so we thought. But the Portuguese had not executed the work so effectually as they ought to have done. They tried to hide cattle and grain in the

woods; and these the French foragers found out. I remember one day seeing rather an amusing affair. A French foraging party had succeeded in finding some bullocks, and one was sent to the front to be divided among a battalion, which held the outposts opposite a hill on which I happened to be standing. I don't know how it came about, but just as the butcher was about to slaughter the animal, it broke loose, and came tearing towards our pickets. Our men turned out, cheering the beast, while the French shouted and pursued. At last the animal got fairly within our line of sentries, and then there rose a loud laugh on one side and a bitter groan on the other. It seemed, however, as if our men had greatly pitied the French; for though they killed the bullock and held up its quarters derisively for a while, the matter ended by their handing over half the beast to the French. It was a very amusing scene."

Speaking of the retreat itself, he gave great credit to Colonel Waters for the daring and skill with which he made himself master of the enemy's designs. "He used to go off and hide himself behind rocks, or wherever else he found he could command a view, and count the numbers of their columns on the march. He almost always succeeded, and the information which he brought back to me, whether important or not, was always such as I knew could be depended upon. He got taken one day when so occupied, and his friends begged me to send him clothes and money under a flag of truce, for they were all very sorry for him. But I would not do it. I was sure that we should have him back again before long, and I told them so. And sure enough so we did. As we were following Massena after the affair at Sabugal, who should come galloping up the road but Waters, with his head bare, and his coat covered with flour. His story was this. The French offered him his parole, which he refused: they sent him into Ciudad-Rodrigo, where he happened to have a good many acquaintances, and where he spent a day or two not disagreeably. By and by an order came to send him to France, and he began his journey escorted by some horsemen. As he had made himself very agreeable to the French generals, they allowed him to retain his own horse; which, however, he was to deliver to the commandant when he got to Bayonne. Waters seemed quite reconciled to his fate, but watched his opportunity, and on the second day, when the escort had begun to grow careless, he suddenly wheeled round, struck spurs into his horse, and shot off. They galloped after him, but he soon distanced them, and was beginning to con-

gratulate himself on being safe, when the head of a French column marching to the rear, showed itself. He struck off across the country in the direction of a mill, which stood on the top of a hill. A word to the miller was enough. Waters dismounted; the miller hid him under his sacks; the horse was concealed in a thicket hard by. The French troopers, who arrived shortly after, were assured that the fugitive had taken a road through the wood, and must by this time be miles away. In that mill Waters remained covered up by sacks till the whole French army past; and so he rejoined us."

It was thus that in the evening of his days the great duke used to converse about the wars which he had waged, and the important events in which he had taken part. You were never baulked if you sought for information on any subject, so long as his keen sense of honour permitted him to speak out. And plans of campaign and the tactics of battle were often fully discussed. But he was always most charming when he descended to little anecdotes such as this, which no one ever told better, or seemed more highly to relish, than himself.

CHAPTER XIV

MARMONT SUCCEEDS MASSENA—LORD WELLINGTON FAILS TO TAKE BADAJOZ — HE TAKES CIUDAD-RODRIGO — INVESTS BADAJOZ AGAIN

THE failure of his attempt to drive the English into the sea proved fatal to Marshal Massena. He was recalled by orders from Paris, and Marshal Marmont replaced him. But Marmont made no immediate movement to the front, and Lord Wellington took advantage of the circumstances to execute a purpose which for some time past he had meditated. Leaving the rest of the army in Beira, under Sir Brent Spencer, he set off with two divisions, the 3rd and the 7th, to assume the direction of affairs in Spanish Estremadura. On the 17th of May he was at Elvas, whence he directed Marshal Beresford to follow cautiously in Soult's footsteps, and to keep him at a distance while he himself pressed the siege of Badajoz.

He had very little time at his disposal, and he knew it. On the 16th of May General Drouet, with nineteen battalions, was reported to have begun his march from Castile, and Lord Wellington calculated that he would be able about the 8th of June to come into communication with Soult. Soult would then, without doubt, advance to relieve Badajoz, and the army of Portugal might be expected to co-operate in the movement. This left little margin for an enterprise so daring as the reduction of a strong place well garrisoned; more especially at a time when the resources at the disposal of the besiegers were shamefully deficient. It was of the greatest consequence, however, that Badajoz should be recovered, and on the 25th of May ground was broken before it. On the 2nd of June the batteries opened, and on the 6th an assault was hazarded. It failed; was renewed on the 9th, and failed again. Lord Wellington felt that for a time at least the game went against him. Already Marmont was in the field. He had compelled Sir Brent Spencer to withdraw beyond the Coa, and thrown supplies into Ciudad-Rodrigo, after which he made a deflection to the left, and marched through the pass of Baños towards Placentia. Soult, at the

same time, quitting his strong position at Llerena, inclined towards Marmont, and pushed forward his advanced posts as far as Los Santos. Not one of these movements escaped Lord Wellington's notice: they brought the enemy too near and in too great strength to permit a prolongation of the siege; so he converted it into a blockade, and set out with every disposable man to join Beresford.

Lord Wellington took post on the 15th of June at Albuera, with 35,268 men, of whom 8000 were Spaniards and 17,785 Portuguese. Marmont's head-quarters were then at Merida; those of Soult at Zafora. They communicated one with another by patrols; and had under their joint orders not fewer than 67,000 excellent troops, of whom 7000 were cavalry. Why they should have lain apart throughout five whole days, when a single concentric march might have brought them together, has never been explained. Was it that they already stood as much in awe of their indefatigable adversary, that they feared to offer him their flank, though only for a single day? Or did the old leaven of jealousy work, impelling them to postpone, to considerations of personal vanity, the interests of the cause which they were bound to uphold? Be this as it may, they lost an opportunity which never presented itself again. Lord Wellington put a bold face on what was really a dangerous position, till Sir Brent Spencer, who had moved along a line parallel with Marmont, began to arrive. His leading division came in on the 20th, and on the 24th the whole of the Anglo-Portuguese army was in force at Albuera.

Though still inferior to the enemy in numbers, and even more so in the composition of his army, for his English infantry amounted to less than 25,000, and his cavalry to little more than 3000, Lord Wellington hesitated whether he should not take the initiative. A moment's reflection showed him, however, that success in a great battle would be too dearly purchased. The French could not at that season of the year retain their hold for any length of time on Estremadura, and their expulsion a few days earlier would not be worth the loss of life which must result from it.

He continued, therefore, to retain his defensive attitude till the 15th of July, when the French marshals, no longer able to find subsistence for their men, broke up. Soult retired into Andalusia, Marmont recrossed the Tagus, placing his army in cantonments between Talavera and Placentia. And then rose the question, What should Lord Wellington do? If he resumed

the attack upon Badajoz, he might succeed in taking the place, though at the risk of having Portugal invaded from the north. If he abandoned that enterprise for the present, it was quite possible, so at least he believed, that either by blockade or by siege operations he might make himself master of Ciudad-Rodrigo. On the whole he preferred taking the latter course, for reasons which he has himself left on record. "From the information I had received, I believed that the strength of the northern army was less than that of the south, and that the *Armèe de Portugal* which was destined to oppose us, on whatever point we should direct our operations, was not likely to be so thoroughly supported in the north as in the south. In this supposition I was mistaken. The army of the north, even before the reinforcements arrived, was stronger than in the south: but it must be observed that there is nothing so difficult as to obtain information of the enemy's numbers in Spain. There is but little communication between one town and another; and although the most accurate account of numbers which have passed through one town can always be obtained, no information can be obtained of what is passing in the next. To this add that the disposition of the Spaniards naturally leads them to exaggerate the strength and success of themselves and their friends, and to despise that of the enemy; and it will not be matter of surprise that we should have been so often misinformed regarding the enemy's numbers."

Lord Wellington refers in this memorandum to one point on which he had been misinformed. He was not aware when he broke up from Albuera, that Napoleon had begun to pour strong reinforcements into Spain. It seemed indeed as if Massena's failure had convinced him, in part, of the danger of leaving the Spanish war behind, while he himself entered upon hostilities with Russia; and he made a great effort to break the strength of the former before the latter should fairly begin. But not in this respect alone had Lord Wellington been misinformed. He was not aware that Marmont on his march towards Estremadura had thrown ample supplies into Ciudad-Rodrigo, and that the garrison of that place, which was described as incapable of living beyond the 20th of August, was provided for a longer defence. When therefore he arrived on his own ground beyond the Coa, and re-established the blockade, he found that many difficulties were to be encountered on which he had not reckoned. Ciudad-Rodrigo, if reduced at all, must be reduced by process of siege, and Marmont was at hand to interrupt the operation with

60,000 men. Now all that Lord Wellington could bring into the field, including a body of guerillas under Don Julian de Sanchez, scarcely amounted to 40,000. It was impossible under such circumstances to attempt anything brilliant, and even the maintenance of the blockade put too great a strain upon his energies. The English lay spread over a vast extent of country, guarding the principal approaches to the city. There were intervals in their line, through one of which Marmont pressed a column, and Ciudad-Rodrigo was re-victualled for eight months. Nor was this all. Twice again before the campaign came to a close his superiority in numbers enabled Marmont to take Lord Wellington at a disadvantage. The latter had directed his scattered divisions to concentrate if seriously threatened by a march to the rear of Guinaldo. But time was required to effect this, and in order to gain time, he himself took post with only two infantry brigades, and 800 horsemen on the heights of Elbodon. Had Marmont attacked him there, as he might have done, with an entire infantry division and thirty squadrons, there is no knowing what the results might have been. But Marmont contented himself with launching his cavalry at the English, who received them in squares; and in squares, when the proper time came, they moved steadily to the rear. Thus the position of Guinaldo was reached. And here, again, fortune held out her hand to Marmont, which he refused to grasp. Some of Lord Wellington's divisions had a wide space to traverse; one, the light division, lost its way. There were but 14,000 men in position, of whom 2500 were cavalry, when Marmont began to show himself. In the course of the same afternoon, and during the night, 50,000 French troops got together, and at daybreak on the 26th of September, Lord Wellington saw the full extent of his danger. It was in such situations as this that his great character came out. He could not quit the ground, because it was the point of assembly for the whole army. He never thought of quitting it, but chatted and laughed with all who approached him, and kept everybody in the best spirits, and on the alert. As hour after hour stole away, however, his anxiety lost itself in astonishment that Marmont should thus leave him unmolested. At last his own people began to come in, and between the evening of the 26th and the early part of the 27th the concentration of his force was complete. He immediately shifted his ground to a stronger position midway between the Agueda and the Coa, while Marmont, sensible that he had lost his chance, and perceiving that his men were begin-

ning to suffer from scarcity, fell back by the road which he had so fruitlessly traversed, and returned to his old cantonments.

Before this short and busy series of operations began, while as yet, indeed, Lord Wellington lay at Albuera, intelligence came in of the arrival in the Tagus of an effective siege-train from England. It was an equipment of which he had sorely felt the need in his recent attempt upon Badajoz; and being now bent upon the reduction of Ciudad-Rodrigo, he directed the train to be sent round to Oporto. To hide this purpose he desired that the store ships should sail in the direction of Cadiz, and that smaller vessels, following them out to sea, should take the guns on board, and steer back to the mouth of the Douro. All this was accomplished easily enough, and Ciudad-Rodrigo was placed in a state of blockade, but then his difficulties began. As far as Lamega there was water carriage for the guns, but between Lamega and Almeida the roads were mere mountain-paths, and the only draught-animals available were oxen. A gun-brig had accompanied the small craft to Oporto, and in the toilsome operations which followed the officers and crew did excellent service; indeed, but for the assistance rendered by them, the siege-train never could have reached Almeida. The duke often adverted in after years to the obligations under which they laid him. "But it was always so," he used to add, "I never found naval men at a loss. Tell them to do anything that is not impossible, and depend upon it they will do it." "You think them superior in these respects to the officers of the army?" "I did not say that." So he always guarded himself against appearing to censure one class of persons while praising another. "I did not say that, but their manner of life creates in them a self-reliance, which you seldom find in men of other professions. They are not to be taken by surprise."

Sickness prevailed to a great extent at this time in the English army. Heavy rains fall during the autumn in Portugal, and the dregs of the Walcheren fever hung about the constitutions of many of the men. Forage likewise failed, and the horses of the cavalry and artillery died by scores. A general of ordinary capacity would have been content under such circumstances to put his troops into quarters and nurse them there; but Lord Wellington had other objects in view. He was anxious to attack in succession Ciudad-Rodrigo and Badajoz, and the intelligence which he received encouraged him to strike the blow at once. And here I may observe, that for his knowledge of the enemy's movements, Lord Wellington was not dependent

entirely upon the reports of the natives. Among his own officers there were several who served him well, especially two lieutenant-colonels bearing the same name—Colquhoun Grant—yet noways related to each other. Both were ready linguists, and possessed a peculiar aptitude for insinuating themselves into the confidence of others; yet one was simply a spy, the other a most enterprising chief of a distinct intelligence department. Of the latter I shall have occasion to speak by and by; of the former it may suffice to observe, that when he put on a disguise, the closest scrutiny failed to detect the English gentleman. The story of that officer's adventures, if detailed at length, would read like a romance. He went about from place to place, round the flanks, into the rear, and through the cantonments of the French army, making himself master of many of their secrets, and rarely failing to transmit the results of his inquiries to Lord Wellington. It was through him that at this time Lord Wellington heard of the departure of 60,000 French troops from Spain into Germany, among whom were 15,000 of the *élite* of Marmont's corps, with 10,000 from the corps of Dorsenne, which kept the province of Gallicia in order, and had its head-quarters in Bargos.

The knowledge of this fact, followed as it was by information that Marmont had been instructed to establish himself at Valladolid, determined Lord Wellington not to defer his daring enterprise. He had already prepared in Almeida materials for one siege; he now gave orders that materials for another should be quietly got ready at Elvas. Meanwhile General Hill, who kept post with 15,000 men at Pontalegre, was instructed to create alarm in Andalusia, by making a demonstration in the direction of Seville, and then he himself took the field. It was in the depth of a winter unusually severe, on the 7th of January, 1812, that, amid frost and snow, he crossed the Ageuda, and closely invested Ciudad-Rodrigo. The ground was rocky, and the cold intense, but the men worked well, and one after another two important outposts, a lunette and a fortified convent, were carried by assault. The breaching batteries then opened upon the body of the place, and on the 16th the garrison was summoned. On the 19th, a refusal to surrender having been returned, two breaches were stormed. The assault took place at night, and the resistance was stern, but it was sternly overcome. Two generals, Craufurd and Mackinnon, fell at the head of their divisions, and in the course of the siege 178 regimental officers, with 818 men, were killed and wounded. The town

likewise caught fire in many places, and suffered the horrors of a sack; but when morning dawned, it was everywhere in possession of the English, and 1500 French troops, all that remained of the garrison, laid down their arms.

So sudden and unlooked-for a conclusion to this siege took the French a little by surprise. Marmont, indeed, never heard till the 15th that Ciudad-Rodrigo was in danger, and on the 21st, while as yet the concentration of his divisions was incomplete, he learned at a place called Fuente de Sancho, that the town had fallen. He refused at first to credit the tidings, and then, furious with himself and with everybody else, more especially with Napoleon, whom he blamed for the catastrophe, he marched off to Salamanca, which he began immediately to fortify. Salamanca was, and still is, a city of colleges and convents, of which three in particular stood then at the angles, so to speak, of a triangle. These he strengthened, and connecting them with a curtain, and covering the whole with outworks and a ditch, he made Salamanca, what Rodrigo had ceased to be, his *place d'armes* on that frontier of Portugal.

Success in the first of his great undertakings only stimulated Lord Wellington to enter upon the second. As soon as he had ascertained that the valley of the Tagus was clear, he put his columns in motion, and passed without a halt from the Agueda to the Guadiana. It was one of the most daring and arduous marches upon record. His flank was presented to the enemy throughout, and a succession of furious winds and heavy rains rendered difficult at times the act of locomotion, both to man and horse. The troops held their way, however, and reached the Guadiana time enough to throw a bridge across the river on the 16th of March. On the 17th Badajoz was invested; that very night ground was broken, and one after another the outworks were breached and taken. For there was no time to conduct this siege, any more than that of Rodrigo, by regular approaches. Two armies, each as numerous as his own, looked on, so to speak, at what he was about. If he failed to master the place before either of them came to its relief, he could not hope to master it at all, and time seemed to him under the circumstances more important than any other consideration.

Nobody who understands what he is speaking or writing about, will ever uphold the duke's sieges in the Peninsula as models of the application of science to the art of war. They were undertaken with means which any general except himself

would have pronounced inadequate, and they succeeded under circumstances which ought to have rendered success impossible. Ciudad-Rodrigo, with 40,000 of the best troops in the world within four marches of it, fell after only twelve days' open trenches. Nineteen days were required to breach Badajoz in two places. Yet neither Soult nor Marmont interfered to prevent the catastrophe. Soult, indeed, was busy with his own siege of Cadiz. Making no progress, he still professed to regard conquest there as far more important than conquest anywhere else; and he suspended his operations only on the 8th, when a hurried message announced to him that the defence of Badajoz could not be much longer maintained. He marched upon Llerena, with 24,000 men, expecting to find Marmont there with 30,000 ready to co-operate with him. But Marmont had not arrived, and, worse still, Badajoz was taken.

CHAPTER XV

SIEGE AND ASSAULT OF BADAJOZ—LORD WELLINGTON DURING THE ASSAULT

BEFORE I describe how the capture of Badajoz came to pass, it may be well to state briefly what Marmont was doing, and why he took that particular line of action on which my reader and I are going to follow him.

It was Napoleon's custom to conduct the greater operations of all his wars from his own head-quarters, wherever these might be. The mind of a giant alone could entertain such an idea; yet the giant in this instance, though usually correct in principle, often blundered, because it was impossible for him to provide against change of circumstances. His explicit order it was which compelled Marmont, against his will, to fall back upon Valladolid, and thus open the way for Lord Wellington's reduction of Ciudad-Rodrigo. In the end of February, 1812, fresh instructions reached Marmont, which Napoleon drew up subsequently to the fall of Ciudad-Rodrigo. These contemplated the step which Lord Wellington had actually taken, and ran thus; "Place your troops so that in four marches they may concentrate at Salamanca. If Wellington move towards Badajoz, do not interfere with him, but march straight upon Almeida, push your parties as far as Coimbra, and you will soon bring him back again. Write at the same time to the Duke of Dalmatia, and request him to carry into effect the orders which I have given him, to advance with 20,000 men on the Guadiana, and thus compel Hill, who has only 15,000, to remain on the Tagus. Do not think, M. le Maréchal, of going towards the south, but penetrate at once into Portugal, if Wellington has committed the mistake of crossing to the right bank of the Tagus."

Nothing could be more judicious than the plan thus proposed; the difficulty was to get it promptly and judiciously executed. Disgusted with what he considered to be the mischievous consequences of the emperor's interference on a prevous occasion, Marmont wasted time in criticising which he ought to have

The queen then, after writing the letter of complaint against her husband to the Archbishop of Glasgow, suddenly determined to visit his sick bed. On Thursday the 23rd of January she set out to Glasgow attended by her lover. They spent the night at Callendar together.[1] In the morning they parted; the earl returned to Edinburgh; Mary Stuart pursued her journey attended by Bothwell's French servant Paris, through whom they had arranged to communicate.

The news that she was on her way to Glasgow anticipated her appearance there. Darnley was confined to his bed; Lennox, who suspected mischief, when he heard that she was coming, sent a gentleman, named Crawford, a noble, fearless kind of person, to apologise for his inability to meet her. It seems that after hearing of the bond at Craigmillar Darnley had written some letter to her, the inconvenient truths of which had been irritating; and she had used certain bitter expressions about him which had been carried to his ears. Both father and son believed that she intended to be revenged; and Crawford when he gave his message did not hide from her that his master was afraid of her.

"There is no remedy against fear," the queen said shortly.

"Madam," Crawford answered, "I know so far of my master that he desires nothing more than that the secrets of every creature's heart were writ in their faces."[2]

Crawford's suspicions were too evident to be concealed. The queen did not like them; she asked sharply if he had more to say; and when he said he had discharged his commission, she bade him "hold his peace."

Lord Darnley had made some use of his illness; as he lay between life and death he had come to understand that he had been a fool, and for the first time in his life had been thinking seriously. When the queen entered his room she found him lying on his couch, weak and unable to move. Her first question was about his letter; it was not her cue to irritate him, and she seemed to expostulate on the credulity with which he had listened to calumnies against her. He excused himself faintly.

whom were many friends of Mary Stuart, had the French originals before them, while we have only translations, or translations of translations.

[1] "When Bothwell was conducting the queen to Glasgow, where she was going to the king, at Callendar after supper, late, Lady Reres came to Bothwell's room, and seeing me there, said, 'What does M. Paris here?' 'It is all the same,' said he, 'Paris will say nothing.' And thereupon she took him to the queen's room."—Examination of French Paris: ANDERSON'S *Collection*. Paris was Bothwell's servant.

[2] Crawford's deposition: *MS. Rolls House.*

She allowed her manner to relax, and she inquired about the cause of his illness.

A soft word unlocked at once the sluices of Darnley's heart; his passion gushed out uncontrolled, and with a wild appeal he threw himself on his wife's forgiveness.

"You are the cause of it," he said; "it comes only from you who will not pardon my faults when I am sorry for them. I have done wrong, I confess it; but others besides me have done wrong, and you have forgiven them, and I am but young. You have forgiven me often you may say; but may not a man of my age for want of counsel, of which I am very destitute, fall twice or thrice and yet repent and learn from experience? Whatever I have done wrong forgive me; I will do so no more. Take me back to you; let me be your husband again or may I never rise from this bed. Say that it shall be so," he went on with wild eagerness; "God knows I am punished for making my god of you—for having no thought but of you." [1]

He was flinging himself into her arms as readily as she could hope or desire; but she was afraid of exciting his suspicions by being too complaisant. She answered kindly that she was sorry to see him so unwell; and she asked him again why he had thought of leaving the country.

He said that "he had never really meant to leave it; yet had it been so there was reason enough; she knew how he had been used."

She went back to the bond of Craigmillar. It was necessary for her to learn who had betrayed the secret and how much of it was known.

Weak and facile as usual Darnley gave up the name of his informant; it was the Laird of Minto; and then he said that "he could not believe that she who was his own proper flesh would do him harm;" "if any other would do it," he added with something of his old bravado, "they should buy him dear unless they took him sleeping."

Her part was difficult to act. As she seemed so kind he begged that she would give him his food; he even wished to kiss her, and his breath after his illness was not pleasant. "It almost killed me," she wrote to Bothwell, "though I sate as far from him as the bed would allow: he is more gay than ever you saw him; in fact he makes love to me, of the which I take so great

[1] Crawford's deposition. The conversation, as related by Darnley to Crawford, tallies exactly with that given by Mary herself to Bothwell in the casket letters.

killed, with heaps of men who choked the approach to the breach. At the place where we stood we were within hearing of the voices of the assailants and the assailed, and it was now painful to notice that the voices of our countrymen had grown fainter, while the French cry of '*Avancez, étrillons ces Anglais*,' became stronger. Another officer came up with still more unfavourable reports, that no progress was being made, for almost all the officers were killed, and none left to lead on the men, of whom a great many had fallen.

"At this moment I cast my eyes on the countenance of Lord Wellington, lit up by the glare of the torch held by Lord March. I never shall forget it to the last moment of my existence, and I could even now sketch it. The jaw had fallen, the face was of unusual length, while the torch-light gave his countenance a lurid aspect; but still the expression of the face was firm. Suddenly turning to me and putting his hand on my arm, he said, 'Go over immediately to Picton, and tell him he must try if he cannot succeed on the castle.' I replied, 'My lord, I have not my horse with me, but I will walk as fast as I can, and I think I can find the way; I know part of the road is swampy.' 'No, no,' he replied, 'I beg your pardon, I thought it was De Lancey." I repeated my offer, saying I was sure I could find the way, but he said, 'No.'

"Another officer arrived, asking loudly, 'Where is Lord Wellington?' He came to announce that Picton was in the castle. He was desired instantly to go to the breach, and to request the stormers to renew their efforts, announcing what had befallen; and immediately Lord Wellington called for his own horse, and followed by the Prince and Lord March, rode to the breach."

I can add nothing to the graphic power of this description, and therefore content myself with saying that the fall of the castle led to the capture of the town, and that the governor, after keeping his hold of a detached work throughout the night, surrendered at discretion on the dawn of the following morning. Neither need I repeat in detail the well-known story of the outrages that followed. No place was ever taken by assault, or probably ever will be so taken, without these horrors attending. Let us draw a veil over them, therefore, and be relieved by stating that a stern but necessary discipline at last prevailed, and that before the close of the second day order was restored.

When all was over, Dr. McGregor went as usual to make his report of the sick and wounded. He found Lord Wellington in

the act of concluding his despatch, and ended his own statement with the expression of a hope that his lordship was satisfied with the conduct of the medical officers. "Perfectly," was the answer, "I saw with my own eyes that their exertions were superhuman." "My lord, nothing will do more good, or more encourage them, than if you say so in your despatches." Lord Wellington looked up, and said abruptly, "Is that usual? I have finished my despatch; but," after a moment's pause, "I will add something about the doctors." Something was added, and "the doctors," for the first time in English military history, found themselves, after the capture of Badajoz, honourably mentioned in public despatches. It was a just tribute to their valuable services, often rendered under fire, and the good custom then established has never since fallen into abeyance.

A more desperate service was never performed in war than this capture of Badajoz by assault. The garrison, strong in numbers, and still more formidable on account of its composition, was admirably handled throughout the siege; and everything which skill and resolution could devise was applied to avert the catastrophe. The breaches were not only retrenched, but across them at the summit were drawn strong iron chains, bristling with bayonets and naked sword-blades. No man succeeded in forcing his way through that barrier; for behind it stood men who knocked on the head all who endeavoured to grasp the chain; and the attempt to bear it back by sheer strength only caused the cruel deaths of such as took part in it. But if the defence was skilful and brave, not less brave and skilful were the measures adopted to subdue it. Danger threatened the defenders from so many points at once, that those accounted the least assailable were partially neglected, and through them the besiegers made their way. When morning dawned, therefore, the breaches had become empty, and over them, mad with excitement, rushed the survivors from the late contest.

The loss to Lord Wellington in this siege was very great. It amounted to 72 officers, 51 sergeants, and 912 rank and file killed; 306 officers, 216 sergeants, and 3787 rank and file wounded. One sergeant and 68 rank and file were missing, of whom several were known to have deserted, though only one of them fell into the hands of the victors. In spite of these casualties, however, and notwithstanding the shake which such enterprises, terminate as they may, always give to discipline, Lord Wellington thought seriously of following up his success

together. He has ever a tear in his eye. He desires I should feed him with my own hands. I am doing what I hate. Would you not laugh to see me lie so well and dissemble so well, and tell truth betwixt my hands? We are coupled with two bad companions. The devil sunder us and God knit us together to be the most faithful couple that ever he united. This is my faith—I will die in it. I am writing to you while the rest are sleeping, since I cannot sleep as they do, and as I would desire —that is in your arms, my dear love; whom I pray God preserve from all evil and send you repose."

Without much moral scrupulousness about her, Mary Stuart had still feelings which answer to a loose man's "sense of honour."

"I must go forward," she said, "with my odious purpose. You make me dissemble so far that I abhor it, and you cause me to do the office of a traitress. If it were not to obey you I had rather die than do it; my heart bleeds at it. He will not come with me except I promise him that I shall be with him as before, and doing this he will do all I please and come with me. To make him trust me I had to fence in some things with him; so when he asked that when he was well we should both have but one bed, I said that if he changed not purpose between now and then it should be so; but in the meantime I bade him take care that he let nobody know of it, because the lords would fear if we agreed together, he would make them feel the small account they made of him. In fine, he will go anywhere that I ask him. Alas! I never deceived anybody; but I remit me altogether to your pleasure. Send me word what to do and I will do it. Consider whether you can contrive anything more secret by medicine. He is to take medicine and baths at Craigmillar. He suspects greatly, and yet he trusts me. I am sorry to hurt any one that depends on me; yet you may command me in all things. About Lady Reres he said, I pray God she may serve you to your honour. He suspects the thing you know, and of his life; but as to the last when I speak two or three kind words he is happy and out of doubt. Burn this letter, for it is dangerous and nothing well said in it."

Then following the ebb and flow of her emotions to that strange point where the criminal passion of a woman becomes almost virtue in its utter self-abandonment, she appealed to Bothwell not to despise her for the treachery to which for his sake she was condescending.

"Have no evil opinion of me for this," she concluded; "you

yourself are the cause of it; for my own private revenge I would not do it to him. Seeing then that to obey you, my dear love, I spare neither honour, conscience, hazard, nor greatness, take it I pray you in good part. Look not at that woman whose false tears should not be so much regarded as the true and faithful labour which I am bearing to deserve her place; to obtain which—against my nature—I betray those that may hinder me. God forgive me, and God give you, my only love, the happiness and prosperity which your humble and faithful friend desires for you. She hopes soon to be another thing to you. It is late. I could write to you for ever; yet now I will kiss your hand and end." [1]

With these thoughts in her mind Mary Stuart Queen of Scotland lay down upon her bed—to sleep, doubtless—sleep with the soft tranquillity of an innocent child. Remorse may disturb the slumbers of the man who is dabbling with his first experiences of wrong. When the pleasure has been tasted and is gone, and nothing is left of the crime but the ruin which it has wrought, then too the Furies take their seats upon the midnight pillow. But the meridian of evil is for the most part left unvexed; and when a man has chosen his road he is let alone to follow it to the end.

The next morning the queen added a few closing words:

"If in the meantime I hear nothing to the contrary, according to my commission I will bring the man to Craigmillar on Monday—where he will be all Wednesday—and I will go to Edinburgh to draw blood of me. Provide for all things and discourse upon it first with yourself."

This letter and another to Maitland she gave in charge to Paris to take to Edinburgh. In delivering them she bade him tell Bothwell that she had prevented the king from kissing her, as Lady Reres could witness; and she told him to ask Maitland whether Craigmillar was to be the place, or whether they had changed their plan. They would give him answers with which he would come back to her immediately. She would herself wait at Glasgow with the king till his return.

Paris after being a day upon the road, reached Edinburgh with his despatches on the night of Saturday the 25th. On going to Bothwell's room the next morning he found the earl absent, and a servant directed him to a house belonging to Sir Robert Balfour, brother of James Balfour who signed the Craigmillar bond.

[1] Mary Stuart to Bothwell: ANDERSON'S *Collection*.

to a general action. I think I can make these movements with safety, excepting always the risk of a general action. I am of opinion, also, that I shall have the advantage in this action, and this is the period of all others when such a movement should be tried. Your lordship will have observed that General Hill's recent operations give great security to our right. The enemy have, in truth, now no good communication across the Tagus, excepting the bridge of Toledo. . . . It is not very probable, therefore, that we should be turned by our right; and if reinforcements should be drawn from the north to press upon our left, we shall always have our retreat open, either by Ciudad-Rodrigo or by the valley of the Tagus."

Two points touched upon in this extract require to be explained. With a view to shorten the distance from his own base, Lord Wellington caused the channels both of the Tagus and of the Douro to be deepened, so that the one became navigable as high as Melpica, near Alcantara, the other to Bacca de Alba. He repaired the bridge likewise at Alcantara, rendering thereby easy and direct his communications with Hill; and he established at Caçeres a large dépôt of provisions. These were the works in which his scattered divisions employed themselves; but Hill had a more dashing enterprise entrusted to him, and it was the only one which for fifty days broke what may be called the uncovenanted truce between the belligerents. The enemy had placed a bridge of boats upon the Tagus at Almaraz, of which they were extremely jealous. It afforded the only means of direct communication between Soult and Marmont, and was on that account a special eye-sore to Lord Wellington. He determined to destroy it, and directed Sir Rowland Hill to effect that object. A rapid night-march brought Hill with 6000 men in front of the French *tête de pont*, at a moment when no danger was apprehended. He carried the work by escalade, turned next upon the forts which commanded the bridge, and took them all. The bridge, with an immense accumulation of stores lying near it, was immediately burnt, and Hill was in full swing towards his cantonments in Merida, before Foy, D'Armagnac, and Drouet, all of whom clustered, so to speak, round the scene of action, became aware of what was going on.

It may well read like a tale twice told, when I say that all this while Lord Wellington was engaged in a voluminous, and for the most part unsatisfactory, correspondence with the Spanish and Portuguese authorities, and with the English

Government. The latter continued to starve him in men and stores, and above all in money, though he warned them that the paper currency which had heretofore kept him afloat, would cease to be of value as soon as he passed the Portuguese frontier. The two former either evaded his requisitions or acted in opposition to them. The Spanish Cortes indeed evinced manifest tokens that the burden of the war was becoming intolerable, for while they despatched every effective battalion and battery to South America, they opened a correspondence with King Joseph. As to the Portuguese Regency, its members no longer took the trouble to disguise the personal antipathy which they entertained towards Lord Wellington. It seemed as if, in their eagerness to thwart and annoy him, they were prepared to sacrifice the country itself. They neither filled up the vacancies which war had occasioned in the ranks, nor kept their skeleton regiments fed or clothed, or even sufficiently armed. As usual, Lord Wellington reasoned with them, expostulated, and threatened. As usual, too, he prevailed, and then he took a survey of the entire theatre of the war, which presented to his gaze the following features.

He found, when all was reckoned up, that in April, 1812, he had under his orders a force of 56,000 British and Portuguese troops. Of these, 15,000 were with Hill in Estremadura, 5000 detached at Cadiz and elsewhere, and 36,000, of whom 3500 were good cavalry, so placed that in two marches they could all be assembled in and about Fuente Guinaldo. A small Spanish corps, numbering about 3500 men, having Don Julien de Sanches and the Conde d'España at its head, was likewise at his disposal: the whole constituting the largest and most effective army which he had yet commanded. He urged the English Government to help him, by throwing 10,000 of the troops which they kept shut up in Sicily upon the coast of Catalonia, and a promise was given that by the first week in June this should be done. That promise, only partially fulfilled so far as the numbers of English troops were concerned, was not kept at all in the matter of time. The Sicilian expedition never reached Spain till the evil had befallen which its presence was intended to avert; and the consequence was that a campaign, brilliantly begun, ended, as I shall have occasion presently to show, in something like failure.

So matters stood on Lord Wellington's side. His strength for active operations was all told, for the Spanish armies were quite broken up, and the Portuguese militia, however capable

of annoying the enemy's convoys, could not be employed in the business of a campaign. Looking at the other side we find, that though the Russian war was begun, an enormous superiority of force still rested with the enemy. Marmont lay in and about Salamanca with 52,000 men; Cafferelli kept open the communication between France and Burgos with 32,000; Joseph was in Madrid with 22,000; Soult in Andalusia with 56,000; and Suchet, for whom Lord Wellington was anxious to find employment in his own province, held Catalonia with 60,000. Over the whole of this large force, Napoleon had at length conferred upon Joseph absolute authority. But Joseph's military abilities were held in small repute by his marshals, and one and all they exhibited a settled determination to bring themselves as little as possible within the reach of his influence. Lord Wellington therefore calculated that by cutting in between Marmont and Joseph, he might be able to dispose of both separately; while Suchet, having his hands full with the Anglo-Sicilian expedition, would hardly care to abandon his own province in order to bring succour to the King. As to Soult, Lord Wellington knew his man. With Hill in his rear and Cadiz before him, the Duke of Dalmatia was little likely to relinquish his own purposes. And so the way seemed open for that course of action on which, when the proper time came, the English general entered. Thus much for his plans in the mass: now a word or two illustrative of his manner of doing business.

There never lived a more rigid economist of time than Arthur Duke of Wellington. While commanding armies in the field, he rose seldom later, often earlier, than six in the morning. If nothing called for special attention abroad, he then sat down to his desk, and continued to read and answer letters and despatches till nine or ten. Immediately after breakfast he received the heads of departments, one by one, the adjutant-general, the quarter-master-general, the chief of the medical staff, the commissary-general, and the head of the intelligence department. If they had papers for him to read or to sign, it was expected that, besides being written in legible hands, these should all be very clearly expressed. If they had suggestions to make or points to argue, all must be done *di viva voce*. He never made notes himself of subjects requiring discussion; he was intolerant of notes if others produced them. After dismissing these gentlemen, he usually mounted his horse and rode sometimes to the outposts, sometimes to one or other of the more distant divisions, as circumstances seemed to require. If

he got home in time to devote an hour or two to writing, he resumed his place at his desk. For all his more important and epistolary communications were written in his own hand. Matters of mere detail, such as orders and replies to official notes, his secretaries or their clerks drew up from memoranda with which he supplied them. But his correspondence with ministers of state and with the governments of Spain and Portugal was entirely autograph.

At six he dined, never alone, nor with the members of his personal staff exclusively about him. Everybody in the most remote degree recommended to his notice, every officer of rank, passing through and leaving his name at head-quarters, was sure to receive an invitation; and making fair allowance for the measure of restraint which seems to be unavoidable at the tables of royalty and commanders-in-chief, the conversation was, for the most part, both interesting and lively. The duke himself spoke out upon all subjects with an absence of reserve which sometimes surprised his guests. Whether the matters under discussion were foreign or domestic politics, he took his own view of each particular case, and stated it broadly. He was rich in anecdotes, most of them taking a ludicrous turn, and without any apparent effort put the company very much at their ease. About nine o'clock he would order coffee, which was accepted as a signal for breaking up, and then he withdrew again to his own room, where he resumed his correspondence and carried it far into the night.

I have specified the head of the intelligence department as one of those who used to attend at Lord Wellington's daily *levées*. The duke had taken infinite pains to organise and arrange that department, and placed at the head of it one of the most remarkable men in the army. Colonel Colquhoun Grant, a relative of the late Sir James McGregor, possessed the talent of acquiring languages to a marvellous degree. He spoke Spanish, Portuguese, and French with a facility and correctness to which Englishmen rarely attain, and with the use of the language he put on the manner and well-nigh the appearance of Spaniard, Portuguese, or Frenchman, as the case might be. Observant, pliable, apparently frank, yet withal close and circumspect, he won the confidence of all whom he was desirous of searching out, and being true to his word, he never threw away a useful confidence which he had once acquired. He had emissaries everywhere; in all the towns and villages in or about which French troops were quartered, and if common rumour

might be trusted, some even at the headquarters of the French armies themselves. With not a few of these he used to hold personal communication, passing round for that purpose, and sometimes even through the French camps. How he contrived so long to escape detection it is hard to say, for he never in these excursions laid aside his English uniform, though he managed to conceal it from the vulgar gaze by a cloak or a blue pellisse thrown over it. In this respect he differed from another Colquhoun Grant, also a colonel, and also a collector of intelligence, to whom I have elsewhere alluded, and who coming nearer to the character of a mere spy, was at once less trusted and less esteemed than his namesake, by Lord Wellington.

The adventures of the head of the Intelligence Department, if related at length, would read like a romance. I shall content myself with briefly alluding to them. Venturing rather too far in front of the advanced sentries, one day, he was taken by the enemy, and carried before Marmont, then on the frontiers of Portugal. There was great rejoicing in the French army when he confessed himself to be Colquhoun Grant. The name was well known at head-quarters, and Marmont, mistaking him for the other Colquhoun Grant, exclaimed, when he made his appearance, "It is well for you, sir, that you wear that bit of red rag; but for that, I should have hanged you on the spot."

The treatment he received was at first harsh, and being hopeless of making his escape, he agreed to give his parole. He was then sent, still under charge of a guard, to Salamanca, where Dr. Curtis, late R. C. Archbishop of Tuam, and at that time head of one of the colleges in the city, found him out. Dr. Curtis's visits to a prisoner so much dreaded gave great offence to Marmont, who met the worthy canon's excuses by reminding him that Grant was neither an Irishman nor a Roman Catholic. But Dr. Curtis was not to be deterred, either by threats or blandishments, from doing his duty, and stoutly denied that Grant had any secrets to be betrayed.

Lord Wellington was much grieved at the loss of Colquhoun Grant, and the more so, that day by day the prisoner contrived to send him scraps of important information. These, written upon small rolls of paper, were carried in the ears of priests and peasants to the English head-quarters. "What an extraordinary fellow that cousin of yours is," said Lord Wellington one day to Sir James McGregor; "I wish he had not given his

back to the glittering halls in Holyrood; Darnley was left alone with his page, Taylor, who slept in his room, and his two servants, Nelson and Edward Seymour. Below in the darkness, Bothwell's two followers shivered beside the powder heap, and listened with hushed breath till all was still.

The king, though it was late, was in no mood for sleep, and Mary's last words sounded awfully in his ears. As soon as she was gone he went over "her many speeches," he spoke of her soft words and her caresses which had seemed sincere, "but the mention of Davie's slaughter marred all his pleasure."[1]

"What will she do?" said he, "it is very lonely." The shadow of death was creeping over him; he was no longer the random boy who two years before had come to Scotland filled with idle dreams of vain ambition. Sorrow, suffering, disease, and fear had done their work. That night before or after the queen's visit he was said to have opened the Prayer-book, and to have read over the 55th Psalm,[2] which by a strange coincidence was in the English service for the day that was dawning.

True or false such was the tale at the time; and the words have a terrible appropriateness.

"Hear my prayer, O Lord, and hide not thyself from my petition.

"My heart is disquieted within me, and the fear of death is fallen upon me.

"Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, and an horrible dread hath overwhelmed me.

"It is not an open enemy that hath done me this dishonour, for then I could have borne it.

"It was even thou my companion, my guide, and my own familiar friend."

Forlorn victim of a cruel age! Twenty-one years old—no more. At the end of an hour he went to bed, with his page at his side. An hour later they two were lying dead in the garden under the stars.

The exact facts of the murder were never known—only at two o'clock that Monday morning, a "crack" was heard which made the drowzy citizens of Edinburgh turn in their sleep, and brought down all that side of Balfour's house of Kirk-a-Field in a confused heap of dust and ruin. Nelson, the sole survivor,

[1] [CALDERWOOD, vol. ii. p. 344.]

[2] [Sir William Drury, the authority for this statement, says that "he went over the 55th Psalm a few hours before his death."—Drury to Cecil, March, 1567: *Border MSS. Rolls House.*]

suddenly took in. The cutter passed on, and they held their course towards the frigate. But not the least curious part of the story, as Grant used to tell it, is this,—the unfortunate boatmen were carried to England, where orders were given to treat them as prisoners of war. With some difficulty, and after considerable delay, Grant succeeded in getting these orders cancelled; and the poor reward of 100 guineas which he had promised to his liberators, was not wrung out of the English treasury except after an acrimonious and protracted correspondence.

CHAPTER XVII

OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN—SALAMANCA TAKEN—BATTLE OF SALAMANCA

HAVING settled his plan of campaign, and completed all his preliminary arrangements, Lord Wellington, as soon as the rain ceased, broke up from his cantonments. He passed the Agueda on the 13th of June, and on the 17th reached the Tormès. This he crossed by two fords, above and below Salamanca, and after driving away some cavalry, and occupying the town, which the same evening was illuminated in his honour, he proceeded to invest the fortified convents. His Spanish correspondents had misled him in regard to these convents. They described them as enclosed by a wall, so inartistically constructed, that a few rounds from a field battery would knock it down, and Lord Wellington, to whom time was of the utmost value, attacked it with his light artillery. After expending as much ammunition as he could spare, and finding that no progress was made, he sent back to Almeida for a fresh supply, and for a battering train. Meanwhile Marmont, who had quitted Salamanca as the English army approached, succeeded, by great exertion, in calling his scattered divisions together. He advanced on the 20th with 25,000 good troops, and on the 23rd 10,000 more overtook him. A series of movements followed, with some sharp affairs of cavalry and a little infantry skirmishing. Both armies threw corps across the Tormès; one seeking to communicate with the convents, the other to prevent it; till by and by the English battering train came up from Almeida, and the siege began in earnest. On the 27th, one of the convents was breached and another in flames. The commandant requested two hours to arrange terms of capitulation. Lord Wellington allowed him five minutes. The five minutes passed without an answer, and the convents were stormed and taken.

The fall of these convents warned Marshall Marmont that he had no longer any business where he was. He wrote to Joseph and Caffarelli begging them earnestly to come to his

support, and began immediately to retire. His retrograde movement was made in the night, between the 28th and 29th of June. He took the direction of the Douro, and moved by the two roads which conduct to Tordesillas and Toro. Lord Wellington followed. But again his spies brought him false intelligence, and he just missed striking a heavy blow at the enemy while in the act of crossing the Douro. With the river between them, the two armies halted and faced one another. Both were willing to receive, neither desired to deliver a battle. For finding that with numbers so evenly balanced, the chances were against him who should take the initiative, each general had his own reasons for desiring to postpone the crisis. Marmont waited for Caffarelli and Joseph. Lord Wellington expected that, through mere lack of provisions, Marmont would be obliged, before many days passed, to shift his ground. Besides, he learned at this time that the co-operation from Sicily, on which he had counted, was not forthcoming. The English Government, as if on purpose to show that it was incapable of being taught, even by experience, had suddenly changed the direction of the Sicilian army. It was sent not to Catalonia but to the north of Italy, thus uncovering, so to speak, Lord Wellington's flank and deranging thereby his whole plan of campaign. A victory over Marmont would under the circumstances be of little real value to him. It might add lustre to his personal renown, and produce a moral effect elsewhere, but no advantage could be taken of it upon the spot, because a further advance into the heart of Spain would only expose him to be beset by overwhelming numbers. He contented himself therefore with abiding where he was and waiting the course of events.

Well-nigh a fortnight so passed. Marmont and Lord Wellington faced each other, the Douro flowing between. Sir Rowland Hill kept a steady eye upon Soult from his head-quarters at Merida. Joseph, troubled by many rumours, and the exploits of Guerilla bands, stood fast in Madrid. Suchet clung to Catalonia, while Caffarelli was restrained at Burgos by exaggerated accounts of the strength of Castaños's army then engaged in the siege of Astorga. At last however, in consequence, as subsequently came out, of peremptory orders from Madrid, Marmont assumed the offensive. On the evening of the 16th two French divisions crossed the Douro at Toro. After remaining in sight of the English all day, they withdrew again in the night, and marching rapidly towards

Tordesillas, were there with the rest of the army carried over the river. An affair of cavalry followed, in which the enemy had the advantage, and the march was continued towards the Guarena. It was Marmont's object to throw himself between Lord Wellington and Ciudad-Rodrigo, and he well-nigh succeeded. Indeed, for several days such a succession of movements took place as put the two armies on their mettle, without either offering to the other the opportunity which both desired of striking home, at an advantage.

Marmont moved all this while towards a ford on the Guarena, over which the castle of Alba de Tormès dominates. It was a point about which Lord Wellington was not anxious, because he had himself placed in the castle a Spanish garrison, strong enough to meet and repel a *coup-de-main*. But in this he deceived himself. The garrison, without any communication made to him, had been withdrawn, and Marmont gained his end. Lord Wellington, seeing that an advantage had been gained for which he could not account, put his columns in motion to counteract it, and throughout the whole of the 20th the two armies marched in parallel lines, within easy cannon-shot of each other. There was a race between them for the village of Cantalpino, which lies at the foot of a commanding eminence. The French, having got the start, won the race, and bivouacked for the night on the high grounds of Aldea Rubea, while Lord Wellington fell back to the position at San Christoval from which he had covered the siege of the fortified convents of Salamanca.

Thus far the advantage in the campaign of marches rested with Marshal Marmont. He had command of the Tormès river, and could push on to interpose between Lord Wellington and his communications, or he could fight a battle, or remain in comparative security where he was till Caffarelli should join him from Burgos. Lord Wellington's only course was to fall back at once upon Ciudad-Rodrigo; and with excellent judgment he resolved to do so, leaving Salamanca to its fate.

It was necessary to let General Castaños know what was proposed, so Lord Wellington wrote to him. The messenger fell into the enemy's hands, and Marmont became aware of Lord Wellington's intentions. He immediately crossed the Tormès at a ford between Huerta and Alba de Tormès, and between Salamanca and the latter place. This was on the 21st, and on the same day the English passed the bridge at Sala-

manca. The two armies thus came into presence the same afternoon.

At midnight information reached Lord Wellington that Caffarelli's troops were beginning to arrive. He made arrangements for a rapid march upon Ciudad-Rodrigo, but he delayed beginning that march till long after dawn on the 22nd, in the hope that Marmont, from over anxiety and undue confidence, might commit some blunder. It is in such situations as this that military genius of the highest order finds its proper field of action. A great general calculates on the temperament of his adversary quite as much as upon the strength of battalions and the positions which they occupy; and Lord Wellington had seen enough of Marmont to arrive at the conclusion that, skilful as he had shown himself in handling troops, he was not unlikely to be run away with. No great while elapsed ere Lord Wellington's anticipations were fulfilled. Seeing the English still before him, Marmont made a dash to anticipate them in their designs. There were two hills, called the Arepiles, on the plateau about which the hostile armies were ranged, one of which crossed in some measure the French line of march. Lord Wellington detached a Portuguese brigade to seize that hill; but the movements of the French were more rapid than those of the Portuguese, and after a brief contest the former crowned the height. A battery of guns was immediately run up, and Marmont, believing that he had blocked the great road to Ciudad-Rodrigo, proceeded to make the most of the advantage which he had won.

On two hills, each commanding a full view of the field of operations, the English and French generals had taken post. How Marmont conducted himself and what he said or did I am not informed, but Lord Wellington looked round with a clear and unembarrassed gaze, and issued, in his usually quiet tone of voice, such orders as were necessary. While the troops on both sides shifted their ground as if on a field-day, he and his staff sat down to breakfast. Not one of Marmont's objects seems to have been mistaken by Lord Wellington. He saw that already the French order of battle was too diffuse, and he anticipated from what was going on that it would soon be interrupted altogether. He was correct in that conjecture. About three in the afternoon two divisions, one of infantry and one of cavalry, which formed the left of the French line, began suddenly to step out. They moved in the direction of some high ground, and of a village which lay about half a league in

advance of them, and were far on their way towards it before troops from the centre arrived to fill the void. The blot was seen and hit on the instant. General Pakenham, with his infantry division supported by two batteries and a brigade of cavalry, was launched upon the rear of the French left. Cole and Leith, having Clinton and Hope in reserve, threw themselves upon the head of the centre, and Pack's Portuguese rushed at the hill, from which in the early part of the day the enemy had driven them off. A fierce battle ensued, of which the issues were not for a moment doubtful. Marmont, galloping to bring up support, was struck by a round shot and carried off the field. General Thomiers, on whom the command devolved, received a wound at the same time, which disabled him. Bonnet, the next in point of seniority, fell likewise; and before General Clausel could arrive at the extreme right, all was confusion.

It was well for Clausel and the wreck of his army that the force which held the hill against which the Portuguese were sent fought so stoutly. They were powerful in artillery, and repulsed the assailants more than once; indeed, it was not till Lord Wellington brought up the 6th British division that the enemy gave way. Time was thus afforded, of which Clausel made good use, to organise a strong rear-guard, under cover of which he drew off his fugitives, and restored some order among them. But, after all, the French owed their escape from total destruction to the closing in of night. It was dusk before Lord Wellington, after mastering the hill, could fall upon the French rear-guard, and quite dark ere the wood under cover of which the enemy fought could be cleared. Even under such circumstances, however, escape would have been impossible but for the evacuation of Alba de Tormès by the Spaniards, of which Lord Wellington was still kept in ignorance. While therefore he pressed forward, expecting to find the enemy crowded about the ford at Huerta, they stole away by the road which leads to Alba, and were across the Tormès before the fact became known, all except a rear-guard of infantry and cavalry, which was charged and cut to pieces by Bock's brigade of heavy German dragoons.

The battle of Salamanca was by far the most decisive which had been fought since the commencement of the war. There were engaged, on the side of the English, 46,400 men, of whom 3500 were Spaniards. The enemy brought into the field 43,000 of all arms, so that in point of mere numbers, Lord Wellington

was superior to Marmont. But when we look to the composition of their respective armies, this advantage, not very great in itself, sinks into nothing. The killed and wounded amounted to 6000, or thereabouts, on the part of the French, and to 5220 on the part of the allies. The English found at the close of the day 74 men missing, the Portuguese 184. The number of prisoners taken from the enemy amounted to between 6000 and 7000. Of the 3500 Spaniards in the field, only two were killed and four wounded; a pretty sure index of the amount of service which they had been able to render. The rout was complete; and its consequences were felt and acknowledged all over Europe. Napoleon heard of it on his march to Moscow, and accepted it as an omen of evil. It encouraged the Russians to make fresh sacrifices, and called up in Germany dreams of approaching deliverance. It put a stop, also, to those negotiations with Joseph which members of the Spanish Cortes were carrying on, and it knit the English and Portuguese armies into one. To Lord Wellington himself it brought an accumulation of honours from all the governments which he served. Created an earl after the capture of Badajoz, he was now advanced by the Prince Regent to the dignity of a marquis. Spain gave him the dukedom of Ciudad-Rodrigo, a knighthood of the Golden Fleece, and the rank of generalissimo of her armies: while Portugal conferred upon him the marquisate of Torres Vedras, together with a palace in Lisbon. These dignities and marks of popular favour he received neither with unbecoming elevation nor with affected indifference. They added nothing to his real greatness, and he knew it; but they testified to the gratitude of the countries which he served, and on that account he prized them.

CHAPTER XVIII

LORD WELLINGTON IN MADRID—SIEGE OF BURGOS—RETREAT TO THE PORTUGUESE FRONTIER

Two courses were now open to the marquis. Either he might follow the wreck of Marmont's army, driving that and Caffarelli's corps beyond the Pyrenees, or he might turn round upon Joseph, and, with or without a fresh battle, deliver Madrid. He chose the latter alternative, partly because a long march to the north would endanger his communications; which Joseph, Soult, and Suchet were all in a condition to threaten; partly because he persuaded himself that if anything could re-awaken the old spirit of Spain, the thought that the capital was wrested from the invader would do so. He contented himself therefore with seeing Clausel across the Douro, and with placing a Spanish corps in Valladolid; while one of his own divisions, with two brigades of cavalry, observed the course of the river. He then faced about to meet Joseph, who had for some days been upon the march, hoping to join Marmont before he came into collision with the English. Joseph heard of Lord Wellington's approach in good time. He declined to measure swords with him, and, covered by his cavalry, in which he was strong, retreated through the passes of the mountains to Madrid. There he waited only to collect his enormous baggage and retinue, and then fell back leisurely towards the Tagus. Lord Wellington has been blamed by military critics, first, for quitting Clausel as soon as he did, and next for allowing Joseph, encumbered with booty, to escape across the Tagus. The censure, as applied to the former of these proceedings, appears to me to be unjust. I cannot quite see my way to a satisfactory vindication of Lord Wellington's policy in the second instance. Had he left Madrid on one side and pursued Joseph he must have overtaken and destroyed him. But the greatest generals who ever lived have sometimes erred, and Lord Wellington, were he now among us to plead his own cause, would probably be able to show that not his policy but our judgment upon it is in fault.

Lord Wellington entered Madrid on the 12th of August. The reception awarded to him was enthusiastic in the extreme. At Strathfieldsay there is a painting which describes this scene pretty nearly as it occurred,—the great commander, on horseback, with only one English officer, the late Lord Raglan, in his train; while Spaniards of all ranks and conditions, grandees, hidalgos, priests, soldiers, citizens, are crowding round him and ladies clinging to his stirrup-leathers in a state of the highest excitement. Carpets cover the pavements, and rich tapestry floats from every lattice, while windows, balconies, and the very tops of the houses, are alive with human forms. It was indeed the welcome of an ancient capital to its deliverer, of which the expression was continued after night-fall by illuminations, and carried on through successive days by fêtes, carousals, and theatrical representations.

There is an old Moorish castle called the Retiro, which dominates over Madrid. It was begirt at this time with a triple wall, and a French garrison held it; a most unwise arrangement on the part of King Joseph, though not, perhaps, greatly to be wondered at, seeing that the place was full of military stores. Before the Retiro, the British army immediately sat down, and in twenty-four hours the castle, with its defenders and stores, surrendered. And then came a pause, for which I confess myself unable to account. Lord Wellington's correspondence throws no more light upon the subject than this, that he himself, having achieved a great moral triumph, could not see, in the wretched state into which Spain had fallen, how it was to be turned to account. For seventeen days, therefore, he gave his troops rest, hoping against hope that the Spaniards would do something, and vainly urging the government to concert with him a plan of operations, and adhere to it. The result is best shown in the subjoined extract of a letter addressed by him, on the 23rd of August, to his brother: "What can be done for this lost nation? As for raising men or supplies, or taking any other measure to enable them to carry on the war, that is out of the question. Indeed, there is nobody to excite them to exertion, or to take advantage of the enthusiasm of the people, or of their enmity against the French. Even the guerillas are getting quietly into the large towns and amusing themselves, or collecting plunder of a better and more valuable description; and nobody looks forward to the exertions to be made, either to improve or to secure our advantage."

If Lord Wellington was baffled on one hand by the supine-

ness of Spain, the French marshals began to suffer on the other from the continual draughts which Napoleon made upon them for reinforcements to his army in the north. Day by day heavy detachments took the road to France, till by and by, after providing garrisons for fortified places, they could not reckon on being able to bring into the field more than 120,000 or 130,000 men. To meet these Lord Wellington had under his own immediate orders at Madrid about 45,000, of whom 15,000 were Spaniards, while General Hill, with 14,000 or 15,000 more, was in Estremadura, keeping Soult in check. One division of infantry, perhaps 5000 strong, with two brigades of cavalry, say 2000, were on the Douro; and now, at length, the arrival of the expedition from Sicily was reported. But besides that the strength of that corps never exceeded 6000 men, the officer in command (General Maitland) committed the twofold mistake of landing at a wrong place, and entering upon his work in a spirit of despondency. Lord Wellington made haste to apply, as far as circumstances would allow, a correction to both grievances. He caused the troops to re-embark, and go round to the theatre of their operations; and he assured General Maitland that whatever the issues of the enterprise might be, he himself was prepared to assume the entire responsibility. But the loss of two precious weeks could not be atoned for, and the consequences in due course developed themselves.

We gather from Lord Wellington's correspondence that the idea of dislodging the enemy from Andalusia presented itself strongly at this time to his mind. It appears certain that if the force from Sicily had been punctual in its arrival, he would have invaded that province. He even directed General Cook, who was in command at Gibraltar, to keep the enemy before Cadiz on the alert, and as early as the 16th of August he began to make preparations for marching through the Sierra Morena. It is equally clear that Marshal Soult, the ablest of Napoleon's generals then in Spain, contemplated the probability of such an enterprise with dismay. Joseph, on the other hand, was bent on recovering Madrid. He commanded Soult to raise the siege of Cadiz, and to move towards Valencia, in order to join him. Suchet received similar orders, and, though not without reluctance, obeyed them, so that by the 25th of August three French corps were in march to form a junction. Meanwhile the beaten army of Portugal had rallied, and being reinforced by Caffarelli, returned upon its steps. The Spaniards were driven out of Valladolid, and strong French patrols of cavalry crossing the

Douro, occasioned much anxiety, up to the gates of Salamanca. Before he could strike at Soult, Lord Wellington saw that it would be necessary to chase these intruders away, in order to render secure the transit by Salamanca, Ciudad-Rodrigo, and Almeida, which still constituted, and must for some time continue to constitute, the real line of his communication with Lisbon. He therefore told off two divisions for the protection of Madrid, and desiring Hill to press Drouet hard in Estremadura, he set off with the rest of the army towards the north.

There befell during Lord Wellington's stay in Madrid one or two events, which, illustrating as they do the character of the man, seem to demand at least passing notice. He found that he was already the subject of Spanish song; and now at the request of the municipal authorities he consented to sit to a Spanish artist. The songs had been composed chiefly by Senor Morette, a musician of considerable eminence, who resided in Cadiz. They were extravagantly laudatory in terms, but the music was good; and nothing seemed to please the gallant marquis more than to sit and listen to them. Indeed, he not unfrequently called for them, reminding his fellow-guests of some warrior chief in ages long past, to whom the enumeration of his own glorious deeds by the bard who followed his standard was the most grateful tribute that could be paid. It would seem, however, that our modern chief was not always in the same good humour. Dr. McGregor had remained behind after the battle of Salamanca to provide for the wants of the sick and wounded, which he did zealously. He arrived in Madrid some time after the burst of exultation had subsided, and proceeding to make his report to the commander of the forces, found him sitting to the artist who had been selected to paint his portrait. The marquis listened in silence till McGregor began to describe how he had ordered up purveyors and commissariat officers from the rear with supplies, and then the suppressed volcano burst out. The marquis sprang to his feet, and demanded in an angry tone what right Dr. McGregor had to do that. The doctor's assurance that nothing else could have saved many valuable lives seemed to make no impression upon his auditor. Neither was the marquis mollified by a reference which McGregor with doubtful discretion made to the outcry which had been raised in England when the wounded were abandoned after the battle of Talavera. "I shall be glad to know," exclaimed the angry marquis, "who commands this army, you or I. I establish one route, one line of communication, and you establish

another, and order the commissariat and supplies to move by that! As long as you live, sir, never do so again; never do anything without my orders." "But, my lord, the case was urgent: there was no time to get your orders." "That don't signify. Never act again without orders, be the consequences what they may."

So spoke the great man in his anger: unreasonably, as angry men always do; yet such fits never lasted long with him, and on the present occasion he soon showed, in his own peculiar way, that he was conscious of his error. He sat down; and almost before the painter could resume his task, said to McGregor in a tone more than usually kind, "Come and dine with me to-day. You'll meet the Guerilla chief, El Medico; who knows but you may get something out of him, in your own profession, worth remembering?"

Let me not quit this subject without observing that the Spanish portrait, though well begun, was never finished. The artist, delighted with the expulsion of the French from Madrid, worked at it for a while enthusiastically. But so much were he and his employers disgusted by the subsequent evacuation of the city, that they refused to go on with it. In its unfinished state it now hangs in the hall at Strathfieldsay.

In pursuance of the plan which he had carefully matured, Lord Wellington quitted Madrid; and, gathering up General Clinton's division and his cavalry posts as he went along, he arrived on the 7th of September at Valladolid. The French quitted the place when they heard of his approach. They fell back in excellent order, and after a few marches halted and offered him battle. This he evaded, rather than declined. He was in hourly expectation of being joined by the army of Galicia, of which the estimated strength was 20,000 men; and comparatively worthless as Spanish soldiers were, 20,000 of them could effect something. The French, on the other hand, appeared nowise bent upon forcing on a collision. Not being attacked, they retired, and thus from day to day both parties marched till they arrived within a few miles of Burgos. There the French halted, and took up a position which seemed to cover that place just as the army of Galicia, 11,300 strong, arrived in Lord Wellington's lines.

There was no further reason why he should hesitate to strike. He made arrangements therefore for fighting a battle on the 17th, but the dawn of day disclosed the fact that the enemy were gone. They had seen the fires of the Spanish troops during

the night, and immediately retreated. Lord Wellington followed, and soon found himself with the river Arlanza in his front; the fords over which, as well as the roads leading up to them, lay under the guns of the castle. It took some hours to surmount this first difficulty, and greater forthwith presented themselves. He could not afford to leave Burgos in his rear; he had no siege-train at hand, nor any other means wherewith to approach the place in regular form. He determined, therefore, after a close reconnaissance, to trust to the valour of his troops, and to risk an assault. Everything was done which under such circumstances courage and skill could effect, but to no purpose. Having no corps of practical engineers to help him, he drove mines, which exploded either too soon or uselessly. The fire of his field guns made little impression, and every attempt to carry the main work by escalade failed. The siege began on the 18th of September, and on the 18th of October the last assault was delivered, in which not fewer than 274 officers and men fell, raising the total loss during the month to 1565.

Lord Wellington had drawn the cord tight, well-nigh to breaking. In his front lay General Souham, at the head of what had formerly been Marmont's and Caffarelli's armies, which in point of numbers thus united equalled, if they did not surpass, his own army. Tidings came in from General Hill, that Joseph, Soult, and Suchet were united, and that with an enormous force they were in full march upon Madrid. Now Hill was too weak to risk a battle with any prospect of success, and defeat would have uncovered at once the line of Lord Wellington's communications. But to protect that line, and at the same time to draw back in the direction of the main army, appeared to be impossible. Lord Wellington so circumstanced had no power of choice. He desired Hill to abandon the line of the Tagus, and to march upon the Adaja, where he promised to meet him. This done, he himself waited only till night set in, and then began his movement to the rear. There was but one bridge over the Arlanza, and upon that the guns of the castle looked down. To get horses and carriages across in the stillness of the night without attracting attention seemed no easy matter. He gave orders that horsemen should ride in loose order, and at a walk. He wrapped the wheels of his guns and carriages in straw, and enjoined perfect silence in the ranks. For a time all went well, and a considerable portion of the army got across unnoticed; but by and by a body of Spanish horsemen chose

to dash across the bridge at a gallop, and the noise which they made roused the sleeping garrison. A fire was immediately opened upon the bridge, and all who subsequently traversed it, did so subject to the crash from time to time of round shot among them.

It is not difficult to write all this, it is easy to read it when written, but to get everything ready for such a start at such a time and under such circumstances taxed even Lord Wellington's energies to the uttermost. His sick and wounded always gave him great anxiety, and never more so than at the present moment. The thought of leaving them behind was terrible. Let the truth however be told, for no man ever lived who could better afford to be described as he was. The failure before Burgos fretted him. He was dissatisfied with himself and with everybody else, and spoke harshly to all who approached him. Dr. McGregor, among others, came in for his own share of sharp words, which the Highland pride of the chief of the medical staff bore with difficulty. This was early in the day preceding the commencement of the retreat, and McGregor returned to his own quarters, sick and sulky. By and by a message came that Lord Wellington desired to see him that evening; but the doctor was still in high dudgeon, and feeling really unwell, he made the most of his malady, and refused to attend. At an early hour next morning, however, he proceeded to Lord Wellington's house, and found that about three o'clock the Marquis had mounted his horse, and ridden off to the front.

McGregor followed. The English army was under arms, in the expectation, as it appeared, of being attacked; and Lord Wellington stood on a hill with a numerous staff about him, searching the French lines with his telescope. No sooner was McGregor's name pronounced, than the Marquis put up his telescope, and taking the doctor by the arm, led him out of the crowd. What followed can best be told in the words of one of the actors in the scene. He said, "We can't keep Madrid. Hill is overpowered, and marching to join me; and I must be off this very night. But what is to become of the sick and wounded? I fear they are very numerous, and there are many wounded who can't be moved. What do you propose to do?" I replied, "I was happy to inform him that our sick and wounded were not numerous; that seeing how his mind was occupied with the siege, I had taken it upon me to get carts from the commissariat, and to employ them and the mules which brought up provisions in removing the sick and wounded to Valladolid."

"Very well indeed," was his reply; "but how many have we in Burgos?" "Not more than sixty, and these mostly too bad to move." "Admirable. I shall be off to-night. Let nobody know this from you, and make your own arrangements."

Did the marquis remember, then, what had passed between him and Dr. McGregor, when they discussed at Madrid a question somewhat similar; or was he, like all really great men, able and willing to contradict himself when an occasion arose which demanded that sacrifice?

The retreat from Burgos to the Portuguese frontier was one of those operations which try to the uttermost both the skill of the commander and the endurance of the men. The commander had to provide not for his own safety alone, but for that of two corps besides which were approaching him from opposite quarters; the men, marching and halting at uncertain intervals, suffered severely from fatigue, from exposure, and from want of provisions. Constant vigilance was necessary in the rear, constant circumspection everywhere. A halt for two nights and a day upon some strong ground above the Carrion, enabled the brigade of guards to come up from Corunna; and now Hill, with his corps in full march from Madrid, must be approached as near as was compatible with keeping open the communication with Ciudad-Rodrigo. The point of junction originally settled was Ruedo, a little town standing about midway between the rivers Adaja and Douro. And towards it Hill, after burning his pontoons and heavy baggage, made his way. He threaded the passes of the Guadiana with Soult at his heels. But he was yet a few miles on the farther side of the Adaja when a courier from Lord Wellington met him with instructions to turn off towards Alba on the Tormès. Then began a series of movements which, involving, as they did, the passage of deep rivers, and the attack and defence of bridges, and the attempts on one side to seize, and on the other to protect, roads and passes of vital importance, well deserve to be followed in detail by all students of the art of war. For the purposes of the general reader it may suffice to say, that at every turn the enemy were baffled; that Souham, often striving, never succeeded in placing himself by Lord Wellington's left upon the line of his communications; that Soult could not cut in between Lord Wellington and General Hill; and that on the same ground, where a few months previously Marmont had been defeated, Wellington and Hill, united, offered battle with 64,000 against 90,000 men. But the enemy declined the challenge. Joseph, Soult, Jourdan, Souham,

were all in Lord Wellington's front, and to Soult appears to have been entrusted the responsibility of directing their combined operations. He adhered to what had been the original plan of campaign, persisting in the attempt to get between the English and their base. He entirely failed.

Lord Wellington, after standing under arms till two o'clock in the afternoon of the 15th of November, took advantage of a fog, and moving rapidly, headed the column which Soult had sent to his own left. From that hour the English were masters of the situation. It rested with them either to halt and fight, or to continue their retreat as they might prefer, and Lord Wellington, for obvious reasons, chose the latter alternative.

A great feat had been performed. The army was extricated from a situation of extraordinary peril and difficulty, without the loss of a gun, and with comparatively few casualties. It suffered, indeed, in discipline, as retiring armies always do; and the seeds of disease were sown. Throughout the 16th, 17th, and 18th, cold rains fell continually. These, besides soaking the men through and through, swelled every stream, and rendered the roads, which wound chiefly through a forest of oak-trees, well-nigh impassable. Moreover the commissariat quite broke down, and hungry soldiers cannot always be restrained from committing irregularities. The woods happened to be full of swine, and the men kept up a tantalising fire of musketry upon the animals, as often as they showed themselves. This was the more inconvenient that the enemy pressed upon the rear of the columns, and it was not always possible to determine whether or not a serious engagement had taken place.

On the whole, however, the retreat was conducted, if not in perfect order, certainly without serious loss. As often as the French advance came up with the English rear, it was driven back; indeed, but for the unfortunate capture of Sir Edward Paget, Lord Wellington's second in command, who, being short-sighted, and crippled by the loss of his right arm, was unable to escape from a body of French cavalry on which he fell, there would have been no cause to speak of the movement as, in any sense of the term, disastrous. At last, on the 19th, the Agueda was gained, and the army began to pass. In the course of the 20th the whole of the divisions were across, and by and by the pleasant order was given to go into cantonments between that river and the Coa.

There was nothing to stay that arrangement. The enemy, like the English, had outmarched their supplies, and grew slack in the pursuit. They finally established themselves below Valladolid and Toledo, while Lord Wellington, sending Hill towards the Tagus, that he might occupy Coria, Palencia, and Bejar, placed his people under cover, and fixed his own head-quarters at Frenada.

CHAPTER XIX

WINTER QUARTERS—OPENING OF THE CAMPAIGN OF 1813—BATTLE OF VITTORIA

TIDINGS of the failure before Burgos and of the retreat to the Portuguese frontier spread far and wide. They startled the allied powers in the north of Europe. They re-awakened the fears and the hostility to the war of the English opposition in both Houses of Parliament. They frightened a timid administration in London; and induced the disaffected in the Spanish Cortes to renew their intrigues with Joseph. Lord Wellington carried off his own mortification with excellent skill. He wrote and spoke of past events as mere accidents in a great struggle; and generously took upon himself faults which might have been charged upon others. His arguments had their weight with all reasonable people; but that which best served his purpose and the purpose of the home government, was the destruction of the French army in Russia, and the return of Napoleon, at this critical moment, alone and a fugitive to Paris. Now then, at last, a belief began to be entertained that the power of France was not irresistible; and the predictions of their own hero, long treated as the outpourings of enthusiasm, were remembered with respect by the English people. As to himself, he saw that a crisis in affairs was come; and he did his best to take advantage of it. He vigorously applied himself to improve the equipment of his army. A baggage and pontoon train were organised. Tents were issued for the shelter of his men, and improved cooking utensils were served out to them. Finally in the depth of winter he made a journey to Cadiz, and once more came face to face with the Spanish Government. His reception was even more enthusiastic and apparently more cordial than it had been on a former occasion. Every suggestion which he made was assented to at once. Spanish armies were no longer to act independently; the whole being consolidated into three corps, were to be fed and otherwise provided for at the expense of Spain, but to take their orders only from Lord Wellington. Liberal of promises, the Spanish Government, as usual, violated

every pledge when the moment of action came. "I am sorry to inform you," wrote Lord Wellington, within a month of returning to Frenada, "that my intentions are entirely thwarted by the government, which has broken all its engagements entered into with me, and ratified in its letter of the 1st of January." The conclusion of the whole matter was, that however willing he might be to employ Spanish troops, and to assign to them their proper part in a war in which they ought to have been principals, he was forced to arrange his plans for the next campaign as if no such bodies as Spanish armies had been in existence.

The reader of Napier's history of this memorable war may not be unapt to imagine that the six years over which it extended, were years of unremitting toil and suffering and danger to all who lived through them. Of toil and suffering, and danger too, the troops had from time to time enough; but every season of repose, and especially the winter, brought great enjoyment in its train, into which no one entered more heartily than Lord Wellington himself. I shall take occasion, by and by, to show how he encouraged field sports among his officers, and how he himself shared in them. For the present we will confine our attention to in-door gaieties, to the balls which went forward, and the theatrical performances, of which two may be described as fair speciments of many.

If Lord Wellington favoured one of the divisions of his army more than the rest, it was the Light Division. Trained under Sir John Moore at Hythe, and brought by Craufurd to perfection in the field, the regiments composing it were models of all that good infantry ought to be; the men well drilled, well disciplined, excellent marchers, and vigilant at the outposts: the officers punctiliously attentive to the minutest details of duty, yet full withal of life and spirits. Among other accomplishments several of these young men possessed a decided talent for acting, and this winter they brought it into play. The division was quartered in Gallego, a small town distant about a league from Frenada. There they found a half-ruined chapel, which, I am sorry to say, they fitted up as a theatre. It is fair to add, however, that the priest offered no objection, and that the people of the town were delighted at the arrangement. The scenes were painted by officers; dresses and decorations provided; and twice or thrice a week, "his Majesty's servants" represented to crowded and applauding audiences the pieces most in vogue in that day. It was Lord Wellington's custom

to ride over, and be present from time to time at these performances. Nor were balls and other pleasantries wanting. A few English ladies had followed their husbands into the field, who, with such Spanish or Portuguese belles as could be looked up, supplied partners to the minority. The majority danced, as a celebrated Presbyterian divine has suggested that all gentlemen should do, with one another. At these entertainments, likewise, Lord Wellington was a frequent guest, and heartily he appeared to enjoy the fun.

The great festival of all was, however, one which deserves to be more accurately described. Instructions reached Lord Wellington early in January, 1813, to invest General Cole with the ensignia of the Bath, and he readily assented, on the suggestion of his younger friends, to make the ceremony as imposing and interesting as possible. The officers of the Light Division were called into counsel, and a plan of operations was arranged. It was settled that the investiture should take place in Ciudad-Rodrigo, and that the ceremony should be followed by a grand dinner and a ball. Now Ciudad-Rodrigo happened to be still in a very dilapidated condition. The Hotel de Ville existed, but it was stripped of furniture; and of the better class of private houses, all had been plundered, and not a few were in ruins. The ingenuity of the managing committee succeeded in overcoming these difficulties. In the palace of San Ildefonso, standing not far off, which had by a sort of miracle escaped the fury of the spoiler, rich damask hangings were found. Some of these were removed to the large room in the Hotel de Ville, and so arranged as to give to that apartment the aspect of a brilliantly-appointed tent. Into another room chairs, tables, and couches were conveyed, borrowed, like the curtains, from the palace of San Ildefonso. From Almeida, twenty-five miles off, glass and crockery were brought up. Lord Wellington lent his plate, as did every one who had a spoon or fork to offer, and the better to provide against accidents, it was arranged that the necessary preparations for the feast should go forward in Lord Wellington's kitchen at Frenada. Interested and amused with the zeal of his young men, Lord Wellington put himself into their hands. His cooks laboured from early dawn, his plate was packed and sent off, and at three o'clock in the afternoon of a clear frosty winter's day, he mounted his horse, *en grand tenue*, with all his orders glittering on his breast. He had seventeen miles to ride, and accomplished the distance in two hours. At half-past five the investiture took place, at six

the invited guests sat down to dinner, the ball began about nine, and the brilliancy of the scene when Lord Wellington entered, struck him with undisguised astonishment. Every person present seemed to be in the highest possible glee. The band of the 52nd discoursed eloquent music. About forty ladies distributed among 200 gentlemen or more, found their dancing powers taxed severely. The marquis threw himself into the humours of the occasion like a school-boy; he danced almost every dance, and narrowly escaped a somewhat ludicrous catastrophe.

The wine both at dinner and supper had circulated freely, and about two in the morning a number of Spanish officers, roused by its effects into enthusiasm, insisted upon carrying Lord Wellington round the room in a chair. He suggested that they should begin with the person of highest rank present, and named the Prince of Orange. The prince was immediately seized, and General Vandeleur, coming up with a view to remonstrate, was seized in like manner. Each was placed in an arm-chair, and hoisted on the shoulders of four bearers. The inevitable consequences soon followed. The bearers had not taken many steps before they with their burthens came down, and amid the shouts of laughter that followed, Lord Wellington made his escape. He mounted his horse, and under the light of a full moon, rode back to his quarters at Frenada.

It was thus that more than fifty years ago, under the greatest captain whom England has ever produced, English soldiers intermixed gaiety with the work of war, and that Lord Wellington himself put his cares aside, in order to promote their amusements, and to take part in them. And indeed, at this stage in the contest, his cares, though harassing enough, were become light in comparison with those of the enemy. Joseph, the intrusive king, felt day by day that his power was passing from him. Napoleon, while investing him with supreme military command, deprived the boon of half its value by withdrawing corps after corps of French troops from the Peninsula. And the directions which he gave for disposing what remained in defensive warfare, proved, when the attempt was made to act upon them, impracticable. The result was a complete reversal of circumstances between the French and English commanders. Lord Wellington knew that his hour was come, and made ready to loosen, once and for ever, the grasp which he had so long held upon Portugal.

He was at this time at the head of 87,000 effective troops, of whom 40,000 were English, 27,000 Portuguese, and 20,000

Spaniards. These he kept in hand for his grand swoop, and they were supported at various points by other armed bodies, which, including the English in Catalonia and the garrisons in Gibraltar and Cadiz, raised the total strength of the allies to about 200,000 men. The French, on the other hand, still showed a muster-roll of 230,000 on paper, but of these, including the reserves at Bayonne, not more than 197,000 were with their colours; and from week to week, as the pressure in the north became more severe, even that number suffered diminution. About 110,000 were in Lord Wellington's immediate front, scattered loosely between Madrid and Pampeluna; the rest were either with Marshal Suchet in Valenica and Catalonia, or so disposed in fortified posts as to keep open the communications with France. They all suffered from what was then a radical defect in the French military system, for they lived from hand to mouth.

His knowledge of these facts, and of the scattered order in which the enemy lay, enabled Lord Wellington, before opening the campaign, to harass and distract them by various feints, and to fix their attention on all the lines, except that which he intended to follow. This done, he waited only till the rains of the early summer ceased, and then, when the rivers were reduced to the lowest level, he bore down upon their communications with France.

In all his wars Lord Wellington never performed an exploit more brilliant than this long march from the Agueda to the Ebro. Over and over again the enemy endeavoured to stop him. They showed themselves in force on strong positions which crossed his path. But on each occasion he appeared to sweep them aside; for they never waited to give battle. Once, and only once, near Valladolid, Joseph seemed disposed to try the issues of a conflict. He had 55,000 men in hand, with a numerous cavalry; and his information respecting the English represented them as not greatly superior to himself. But out-manœuvred and circumvented, he abandoned that design, and after a little hesitation gave up also the line of the Pesuerga river. He describes himself in his correspondence as more than half-disposed to retire at this time into Navarre. This course might have protracted the struggle, because in Navarre Suchet could have joined him. But the thought of leaving open the great road into France by Bayonne frightened him, and he persevered in keeping to the eastern provinces. So likewise the recollection

of what Burgos had effected in the last campaign invited him to halt there. But he resisted this temptation also, and causing the citadel to be blown up, went on his way till he had placed the Ebro between him and his pursuers.

Lord Wellington had anticipated some resistance at Burgos, and came prepared for it; but an explosion, heard while the heads of his columns were yet a good way off, told its own tale. The place was in ruins. He would have passed it by without a halt, but that the troops had outmarched their supplies, and it was necessary to pause for a day or two, in order that the commissariat mules might overtake them. They came in due time, and then onwards, and still onwards, the tide of war rolled. At last the heads of the columns touched the right bank of the Ebro, where all persons, both in the English and in the French army, anticipated a pause,—but there was no pause. Over the rough channel of that rolling river the pursuers broke, and Joseph, driven like a stag to bay, turned to defend himself.

Anticipating no such issue, Joseph, as soon as he gained the farther bank of the Ebro, had scattered his troops wherever the means of subsistence appeared to be most abundant. The burst of the English across that barrier took him by surprise; and his marches to concentrate again were as fatiguing to the men as they proved perplexing to the generals of division. With great difficulty he got into position on the night of the 19th, and stood with the little river Zadora in his front, on a line which measured from La Puebla de Arganzon on the left, to Vittoria and the village of Gamara Major on the right, not less than two leagues and a half. But this was not all. His line ran in a direction parallel with the road through Vittoria to Bayonne. His enormous baggage was all accumulated in Vittoria itself; and such was the rugged nature of the country round about, that his cavalry, in which the main portion of his strength lay, proved useless to him. All these defects of arrangement became apparent to Lord Wellington in the course of the reconnaissance which he made on the 20th, and with the early dawn of the 21st he came down upon them.

Lord Wellington's plan of battle was masterly. He threw the left of his army on the enemy's right, engaging at the same time both the left and the centre, and driving back the division which held Gamara, made himself master of the great road from Vittoria to Bayonne. Now along that road the whole of Joseph's divisions, if unable to hold their ground, must

necessarily march, and they did so march from Puebla downwards, only to encounter obstacles, which proved fatal to an orderly retreat. Vittoria itself, choked up with wagons and baggage-animals, could not be entered. The fugitives made a détour, and endeavoured to go round the town, but there the left of the English army met them, and so in the end they all turned away, rushing *pêle-mêle* along the Pampeluna road. It was the most complete rout that had been witnessed since the war began. Nineteen hundred prisoners, 151 pieces of cannon, the military chest, and much of the plunder of Spain, fell into the hands of the victors. Indeed, Joseph himself narrowly escaped capture; for being pursued by some English Huzzars, he had barely time to get out of his carriage, mount a trooper's horse, and gallop away.

The amount of fatigue which Lord Wellington went through during the progress of these operations, only a constitution cast, like his, in a mould of iron, could have endured. From the hour when he crossed the Douro till the battle of Vittoria came to an end, he was in the saddle day by day, from early dawn till dark. His meals he ate by the way-side, as they were brought up to him, and many hours of each night he spent in writing. He seemed to watch and to direct every movement of every corps in his army. Whenever a height presented itself whence an extensive view might be expected, he made for it, and he was up at the fords of all the rivers often before his men began to try them. It was remarked of him also, that not at any former period had his good humour been more entirely sustained. No mistake escaped him, no blunder passed unreproved; but reproof itself was administered rather as a duty than to indulge temper. Even his treatment of Captain Ramsay, one of the bravest and most efficient artillery officers in the army, though severe, was just. Captain Ramsay had been placed by Lord Wellington himself, during the progress of the battle of Vittoria, in a position from which he was enjoined on no account to remove, except by orders of the commander-in-chief. It was a spot, to all appearance, out of the range of the contest, and Ramsay, as brave men under such circumstances are prone to do, chafed over his own inaction. By and by things seemed to go hard with a portion of the English line, whereupon a general of division rode up to Ramsay and asked in an excited tone, "What he was doing there?" "Nothing," was the reply; "the marquis placed me here, and here I suppose I must remain." "The marquis could not mean you to remain

idle here, when your guns are so much wanted elsewhere; follow me." Unfortunately for himself, Ramsay obeyed. He galloped off, entered into action, and did good service; but the French were not long afterwards turned at Vittoria and fled along the Pampeluna road. The direction of their retreat was communicated to Lord Wellington, with these words in addition, "and we've nothing up to stop them!" "Nothing up!" exclaimed the marquis, "what has become of Ramsay and his guns? I placed him exactly where I knew the enemy would defile, is he not there?" The whole story was told to the marquis exactly as it befell, but he refused to be pacified. Ramsay was not put in arrest, nor tried by a court-martial; his past brilliant and useful career averted that calamity; but the command of the battery was taken from him, and he was sent home. He never got over the blow. Being restored to his command in 1815, he went with his guns to Belgium, and fell in the crowning victory at Waterloo.

Being on the subject of Lord Wellington's general bearing throughout the progress of this campaign, I may as well describe what occurred between him and the chief of his medical staff before the campaign began. On the day before the army broke up, Dr. McGregor waited upon the marquis to explain the arrangements which he had made for the care of the sick and wounded. The marquis listened attentively, and when the doctor came to an end, objected to certain details and suggested others. Dr. McGregor returned to his quarters, thinking no more about the matter. But that same night, just before retiring to bed, he received a letter in the marquis's handwriting, which covered two folio sheets, and stated in full Lord Wellington's reasons for all that he had suggested! And that at a time when the mind of the writer must have been engrossed with a thousand other subjects, some of them perhaps more important than even this. Such, however, was the duke. He liked to carry men's judgment with him. He was not content, even when his will was law, to give orders without making clear their reasonableness. And this it was, without doubt, which, added to his promptitude and decision, won for him the entire confidence of all who served under him.

CHAPTER XX

SIEGE OF SAN SEBASTIAN—BATTLES OF THE PYRENEES

THE battle of Vittoria may be said to have relieved the north and east of the Spanish Peninsula from the presence of the invader. Clausel, who was moving up the Ebro, heard of the disaster while yet two days' march from Joseph, and retreated into France. Foy, who was coming from France, halted near Tolosa; and collecting as many fugitives as he could, endeavoured there to make a stand. But Sir Thomas Graham with the left column of the allied army fell upon him, and drove him away. There remained now only three garrisons to deal with, that of San Sebastian at the mouth of the Urumea; that of Pampeluna, south-eastward in a gorge of the mountains; and that of Santona, midway between Passages and the Bidassoa. The reduction of San Sebastian as speedily as possible was felt to be expedient; because Lord Wellington had already established his communications with England, through Santander, Passages, and other harbours on the east coast; and to leave the enemy in possession of a stronghold whence these harbours could be even partially commanded would have been unwise. About Pampeluna and Santona he was less anxious. He contented himself, therefore, with putting both in a state of blockade; while he directed Sir Thomas Graham with one English division and some corps of Portuguese and Spanish troops, to press the siege of San Sebastian.

In order to protect these operations it was necessary to observe the enemy, who, recently placed under the command of Marshal Soult, were in position on the French side of the Bidassoa. Now the distance between San Sebastian and Pampeluna cannot be less than sixty English miles. The two places are separated from each other by the Pyrenees, almost all the great valleys of which run north and south, with steep and often impassable ridges intervening, and very few lateral glens coming in from east to west. It was a country difficult to guard, and Lord Wellington did his best with it. He spread his troops by divisions, and here and there by brigades, among the heads of the great valleys and

evening he had reached Lifford, where he expected to find Randolph and the English army.

At Lifford, however, no English were to be discovered, but only news of them.

Randolph, to whose discretion the ultimate choice of his quarters had been committed, had been struck as he came up Lough Foyle with the situation of Derry. Nothing then stood on the site of the present city save a decrepit and deserted monastery of Augustine monks, which was said to have been built in the time of St. Columba; but the eye of the English commander saw in the form of the ground, in the magnificent lake, and the splendid tide river, a site for the foundation of a powerful colony suited alike for a military station and a commercial and agricultural town. There therefore Colonel Randolph had landed his men, and there Sidney joined him, and after a careful survey entirely approved his judgment. The monastery with a few sheds attached to it provided shelter. The English troops had not been idle and had already entrenched themselves "in a very warlike manner." O'Donnell, O'Dogherty, and the other friends of England "agreed all of them that it was the very best spot in the northern counties to build a city."

At all events for present purposes the northern force was to remain there during the winter. Sidney stayed a few days at Derry, and then leaving Randolph with 650 men, 350 pioneers, and provisions for two months, continued his own march. His object was to replace O'Donnell in possession of his own country and castles, restore O'Dogherty and the other chiefs and commit them to the protection of Randolph, while he himself would sweep through the whole northern province, encourage the loyal clans to return to their allegiance, and show the people generally that there was no part of Ireland to which the arm of the deputy could not reach to reward the faithful and punish the rebellious.

Donegal was his next point after leaving Lough Foyle—once a thriving town inhabited by English colonists—at the time of Sidney's arrival a pile of ruins, in the midst of which, like a wild beast's den strewed round with mangled bones, rose "the largest and strongest castle which he had seen in Ireland." It was held by one of O'Donnell's kinsmen, to whom Shan—to attach him to his cause—had given his sister for a wife. At the appearance of the old chief with the English army it was immediately surrendered. O'Donnell was at last rewarded for his fidelity and sufferings, and the whole tribe with eager protestations of allegiance gave sureties for their future loyalty.

same instant, that the valley of Lanz was no longer a safe line of communication for his own troops; and equally so, that unless stopped in time, they would find themselves cut in half by the advancing column. He was quite alone, except that Lord Fitzroy Somerset rode with him. They had neither orderlies nor servants in attendance; so throwing his bridle to Lord Fitzroy, Lord Wellington leaped from his horse, and on the parapet of the bridge wrote with a pencil the necessary orders. With this scrap of paper Lord Fitzroy galloped to the rear; while Lord Wellington, waiting till the enemy's advance had well-nigh reached the further end of the bridge, sprang into the saddle and rode away. He had a range of steep heights before him, which he crossed; over the valley at the further side uprose another ridge, which he ascended, and being recognised as he approached the summit by a Portuguese battalion, the men raised a cry of satisfaction. It was at once caught up by the 3rd and 4th divisions, which stood under arms not far off, and they, delighted, as in moments of danger the troops always were, to find their commander near them, rent the air with their shouts. Soult heard the tumult, and perfectly understood what it meant. Almost involuntarily he stopped the march of his troops; and ascending a hill opposite to that on which Lord Wellington stood, the two generals gazed at one another.

The delay of an hour or two was all that Lord Wellington desired. His orders despatched by Lord Fitzroy Somerset had changed the line of march for the 6th division, which, instead of pushing through the Lanz valley, turned aside, and came in, by a wide détour, on the interval which separated Hill from the right of the army. Had Soult attacked on the 27th he would have had only two divisions with Morillo's Spaniards to deal with. On the 28th three divisions were in line. The reason which he himself assigns for the delay is, that he expected every moment to be joined by D'Erlon. But D'Erlon was still absent on the 28th, when he did strike the blow. The French, superior in numbers, behaved with the utmost gallantry; the allies, admirably posted, met and repelled every attack. Lines and columns were continually intermixed; indeed, Lord Wellington describes the encounter as "bludgeon work." At last the struggle ended, leaving each party in possession, pretty nearly, of the ground which it occupied ere the battle began. And both armies slept beside their dead.

The dawn of the 29th found the hostile lines under arms, but no fighting took place. It was not Lord Wellington's policy to

provoke a battle, and Soult held back from forcing it on. They were equally looking for reinforcements. Those for Lord Wellington arrived first, and in greater comparative strength. He had 30,000 Anglo-Portuguese in hand before the sun went down; whereas, on the previous day, he had carried less than 16,000 into action. An hour or two later, D'Erlon arrived with 18,000 for Soult. These, added to 18,000—the remains of the 20,000 who had fought on the previous day—still left him numerically superior to his opponent. But the French were by this time a good deal demoralised by constant reverses, and their leader began to be in fear that provisions would fail him. He determined, therefore, to extricate himself from the difficulties of his situation, while at the same time he should make an effort to raise the siege of San Sebastian. With this view he left a division to screen the movement, and turned with the rest upon Hill. It was a bold but dangerous stroke. It presented the flank of the French army on its march to Lord Wellington, who was neither slow to divine the cause of the proceeding nor backward in taking advantage of it. All the divisions were put in motion, and through every valley which bore upon the route of the French columns, fierce attacks were made. There was hard fighting, which went entirely against the French. Foy, with 8000 men, was separated from the main body. Reille and Clausel, very roughly handled, gave way; while Soult himself, driven out of Sauroren, retreated upon San Esteban by the gorge of Donna Maria. But even this expedient had been surmised, and Hill, uniting to himself Morillo's Spaniards, pushed through gorges and defiles, and headed the column. And now occurred one of those accidents which lead so often in war to great failures as well as to great successes. Lord Wellington had so timed the movements of his corps, that he was on the point of surrounding Soult with the mass of his army, when three wretched stragglers, looking for plunder in the glen into which the enemy had been crowded, fell into the hands of a patrol. They were carried before Soult, told him whence they came, and made him for the first time aware that the English were all round him, except on one narrow opening; and that even this would in the course of a few hours be stopped. He lost no time in breaking through. In haste, and some confusion, his troops threaded the interval, leaving all their baggage behind. The guns he had previously sent away by Roncesvalles and St. Jean Pied-de-Port.

From that date up to the 2nd of August, all the defiles of the

Pyrenees rang with a continual fire of musketry. The French in full retreat, the English in hot pursuit, scaled crags, plunged down ravines, and passed torrents. The loss to the fugitives was enormous. It amounted, throughout the operations, to 15,000 men; while on the side of the allies, 7300 were returned as killed, wounded, and missing.

Having thus crippled Soult, Lord Wellington resumed the siege of San Sebastian, the details of which he committed, as before, to Sir Thomas Graham. The arrival from England of a fresh battering-train and a large supply of ammunition greatly facilitated this operation. The trenches had not been filled in, and the batteries were soon re-armed, so that on the 26th of August a heavy fire was once more opened upon the place. Before it old walls and recently constructed defences came down, and on the 31st the assault was delivered. A terrible combat ensued in the breaches, over the parapets, through the streets of the town, amid blazing houses and under the tumult of a thunder-storm. But this time the assailants prevailed, and the governor, retreating to the castle which overhangs the city, held out there for a few days longer, and then surrendered.

While the assault was going on, a column of French troops, having passed the Bidassoa near Irun, and by fords higher up the stream, endeavoured to force their way through the allied lines. Their main attack was directed against some Spanish troops which occupied the heights of San Martial; but the advantages of position were so entirely with the Spaniards, that after some hours spent in hopeless endeavour to clamber up precipices and pass through thick woods, the French abandoned the enterprise, and withdrew again across the Bidassoa. There occurred however during the combat an incident which deserves notice, because of the light which it throws upon the duke's healthy principle of action. He had always spoken in his public despatches more favourably of the Spanish troops than they deserved, and he did so for two reasons. First, he considered himself bound to spare as much as possible the pride which enters so largely into the national character of the Spaniard, and next he believed, that to raise men generally in the scale of moral worth, judicious encouragement goes further than indiscriminate censure. On the present occasion the features of the country which the Spaniards had been appointed to hold were familiar to him. He knew that it was next to impossible for the enemy to dislodge them by fair fighting; yet scarcely was the battle begun when the Spanish generals sent, as usual, to

entreat that English troops would come to their support. The duke took the bearers of this message apart, reasoned with them, and pointed out that if he were to act on this suggestion, an opportunity would be lost to their countrymen of acquiring a good name, such as might never occur again. "I can easily send you English troops; and if I see that you are hard pressed, they shall be forthcoming. But you hold ground which women might keep against giants. Go back, and tell General Freyre that I won't do him the injustice to prevent his coming out of the affair of this day as a conqueror."

The Spanish officers rode back to the heights. The first English division stood to its arms in the valley below, and by and by the 85th regiment coming up from San Sebastian took ground also in support. But not one English soldier fired a musket that day. The Spaniards had all the fighting to themselves, and the 31st of August became in consequence to them one of the most glorious days in their military history.

CHAPTER XXI

INVASION OF FRANCE—BATTLE OF THE NIVELLE

THERE occurred, during an interval in these marches and battles, a little incident, which was a good deal spoken about at the time, and seems therefore to demand notice here. Lord Wellington, after directing a Spanish column to move up a glen towards a specific point, looked at his watch, and observed to those about him that it would take the men so much time to perform the journey. He added that he was tired, and dismounting from his horse, wrapped himself in his cloak, and went to sleep. A crowd of officers stood round him, and among others some Spanish generals, whose astonishment at the coolness of their chief was expressed in audible whispers. For the very crisis of the struggle was impending, and the French being in greater strength upon the spot, seemed to have the ball at their foot. Now, among the officers of the head-quarters' staff, there were several who had never approved the passage of the Ebro. These began to speak their minds freely, and one, the bravest of the brave, the gallant Colonel Gordon, exclaimed, "I always thought it would come to this. I was sure we should make a mess of it, if we got entangled among the Pyrenees, and now see if my words don't come true." Lord Wellington happened to awake just as Gordon thus unburdened his conscience. He sat up, and without addressing himself to any one in particular, extended his right hand open, and said, as he closed it, "I have them all in my hand, just like that." Not another word was spoken. The Spaniards had reached the top of the glen; Lord Wellington and his attendants remounted their horses, and the battle was renewed.

And now honours began to shower upon him afresh, and so did sources of anxiety. The prince regent sent him a field-marshal's bâton, in exchange, as he stated in an autograph letter, for that of Marshal Jourdan. But the same post which brought this communication brought likewise a proposal from the sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, that Lord Wellington should hand over his Peninsular army to somebody else,

and come and put himself at the head of their troops. His answer was in keeping with his character for simplicity and truth. If the prince regent gave the order, he should obey. But he would never willingly withdraw from a scene where everybody trusted him, and place himself in a situation in which it was more than probable that others could do as well as he. In the same wise spirit he put aside the request of these sovereigns, backed as it was by the entreaties of his own government, to precipitate an invasion of France. "My future operations," he wrote in reply, "will depend a good deal upon what passes in the north of Europe; and if operations should recommence there, upon the strength and nature of the reinforcements which the enemy shall get in our front." For at the very time when he was urged to go forward, the northern powers had agreed to an armistice, and were carrying on negotiations with Napoleon. "Consider," he says in a private letter to Lord William Bentinck, "what they want me to do. To invade France where everybody is a soldier, where the population is armed and organised under persons not, as in other countries, inexperienced in arms, but men who in the course of the last twenty-five years, in which France has been engaged with all Europe, must, the majority of them at least, have served somewhere." But this was not all. The army of which he was at the head, though superior to what it had been a year or two previously, was still unfit in all its parts to be depended upon. By judiciously intermixing inferior with superior troops he rendered the whole pliable. But this was not done, except at the cost of inconveniences which would be aggravated a thousand-fold the moment he passed the frontier. For then the Spaniards, whom their own government habitually neglected while at home, would be left to starve, or thrown on the British commissariat. He well describes this state of things in a letter to Lord William Bentinck, dated from Lazaca on the 9th of August: "The system," he says, "is not perfect; but what is perfect with such instruments and such defective means? It would be much more easy and convenient for me, and for the British army, to join all the Spaniards into one corps, all the British into another, and all the Portuguese into a third. That would be the most simple arrangement; but one fine morning I should find both Spaniards and Portuguese surprised and defeated, and the British would cut but a poor figure alone."

One more source of anxiety presented itself at this time, which deserves, at least, passing notice. Napoleon, it was

rumoured, had opened a negotiation for a separate peace with Spain, and undertook to restore Ferdinand, on condition that all the country between the Pyrenees and the Ebro should be annexed to France. There was reason to believe that Ferdinand, in his abject anxiety to reign, was willing to accede to these terms; and a party in the Cortes seemed not to be averse to them. Lord Wellington wrote strongly against the arrangement, both to his brother at Cadiz, and to the government at home. But the project seemed to have been, at least, premature. The time was not yet come for Napoleon to concede even so much, for the sake of peace; though a constant whisper of treason, falling in with so many overt acts of ill-will, could not but occasion anxiety at head-quarters. All these doubts, and many more which I need not stop to particularise, weighed upon the mind of the English general, and rendered him less anxious than he might have otherwise been to push the war for the present beyond the Spanish border. But the tide had set in strong against the recent masters of the continent, and Lord Wellington acknowledged its influence. War was renewed in the north of Europe, and in the south the English, after fortifying the mouths of the passes which they were about to leave behind, crossed the Bidassoa.

Meanwhile Soult's position on the further bank of that stream was strong, but like all positions in mountain-countries, it had its weak points. He regarded it, therefore, as a mere line of resistance, and carefully fortified two other lines, one in front of the Nivelle, the other along the Adour and about Bayonne. On the 7th of October he was attacked and driven back upon his second line. Pampeluna, however, still held out, and the news from Dresden proved unsatisfactory; two circumstances which operated in restraining Lord Wellington from going forward. He halted, therefore, on the ground which he had won, and for well-nigh a month the war languished. By and by, however, came tidings of the battle of Leipsic, and of the retreat of Napoleon across the Rhine. The surrender of Pampeluna followed soon afterwards, and early in November preparations were made for trying once more the fortune of battle.

The weather had been wet and blustering during the latter days of October and the beginning of November. All the lanes and by-paths in the department of the Lower Pyrenees were rendered thereby impassable, so that some portion at least of the delay, which thoughtless men wondered at, was owing to the impossibility of moving guns and even men through a sea

of mud. At last the storm ceased, and an hour before dawn on the 10th the troops stood to their arms.

The position which Lord Wellington was about to attack resembled in some of its features his own famous lines of Torres Vedras. It consisted of a series of redoubts and open works extending from the sea on one flank, well-nigh to the river Nive on the other. The ground thus protected being on the left undulating rather than hilly, rose towards the right into lofty eminences, each of which commanded the valleys on either side, and was strongly fortified. The weakest point of all was in the centre, where the village of Sarre protruded beyond the proper line, standing however so awkwardly towards the adjacent hills that it could not be left unguarded. Lord Wellington saw where the chink in his adversary's armour lay, and thrust at it. His plan of operations was this. He aimed at breaking through the French centre, in which if he could succeed, he should be able to march upon Bayonne and interpose himself between that city and one if not both of the separated portions of the beaten army. But in order to accomplish this, it was necessary to engage the enemy's attention at all points along their line. He attacked, therefore, in four separate columns. Hill on the extreme right, with the 2nd and 6th divisions, Hamilton's Portuguese brigade, Murillo's Spaniards, and a due proportion of artillery, was directed to move against Clausel's position in rear of Ainhoe. Beresford, with the 3rd, 4th, and 7th divisions, fell upon the redoubts in front of Sarre, and upon Sarre itself; while Alten, with the light division, and Longa's Spaniards, attacked the little Rhune, and co-operated with Giron in assaulting the heights behind Sarre. These several movements were supported by a body of cavalry, under Sir Stapleton Cotton, and by four batteries of cannon, as well as by Freyre's Spaniards, who, advancing from Mandale towards Ascain, would be able to hold in check any reinforcements which might endeavour to make their way from the right to the centre. Finally, Sir John Hope, who had succeeded Sir Thomas Graham in command of the left column, was to drive in the posts in front of the Lower Nivelle, to carry the redoubts above Urogne, to establish himself on the heights facing Siboure, and to act from thence as circumstances might direct. His force consisted of the 1st and 5th divisions, of the brigades of Wilson, Bradford, and Aylmer, of Vandeleur's light dragoons, the 12th and 16th, and of the heavy German cavalry.

In spite of narrow defiles and broken roads, the attacks thus

skilfully arranged, succeeded in every quarter. On the right, and in the centre, redoubts and entrenchments were carried with little comparative loss. On the left, Urogne being entered at the double, a continued skirmish was kept up throughout the day, in the meadows beyond, and along the base of the hills which look down upon them. Yet so much more serious than had been anticipated were the obstacles presented by the face of the country, that daylight failed before full advantage could be taken of the successes thus achieved. Soult, on the other hand, was not slow in perceiving that his lines had ceased to be tenable. He withdrew from such of the works as he still held when darkness set in, and before daybreak on the 11th, was across the Nivelle, with his right on the sea at Bidard, and his left at St. Barbe.

The battle of the Nivelle cost the allies, in killed, wounded, and missing, 2694 officers and men. The loss to the French was much more severe; it amounted to 4265, including 1400 prisoners. They left, besides, in the hands of the victors, fifty-one pieces of cannon, six ammunition waggons, and all their magazines at St. Jean de Luz and Espalette. Yet their retreat was conducted in excellent order. They broke down the bridges on the Neville, and their rear made a show of receiving a second action at Bidard. But the advance of the allies was too formidable for them. As soon as light came in, Hope moved from Urogne, and passed the Nivelle by a ford, above the broken bridge at St. Jean de Luz. Beresford and Hill threatened the enemy simultaneously in the centre and on the right. Soult again shifted his ground. He fell back towards Bayonne, in the entrenched camp before which he established himself, having one post at Anglette, on the great Madrid road, and others to the right and left of it, from the Adour to the Nive.

Before he crossed the Bidassoa, Lord Wellington had, in general orders, cautioned his troops against offering violence to the persons and property of the French people. It was the only answer which he condescended to make to a shower of proclamations, which, coming from the other side, threatened the allies with war to the knife in the event of their polluting the soil of France with their presence. Lord Wellington's announcement, unlike that of Marshal Soult, was something more than a mere bit of gasconade. He meant what he said; and during the progress of the battle of Nivelle itself, found an opportunity of showing how entirely he was in earnest. It happened that in riding from one rising ground to another, he

encountered in a valley a French peasant, whom, with a flock of twenty or thirty sheep, a troop of English cavalry had arrested. "What are you doing with that man?" he demanded of the officer commanding the troop. "I have stopped him from driving his sheep into Bayonne, my lord." "And who told you to do so?" Then turning to the peasant, he said in French, "You want to drive your sheep to Bayonne. I can't at present give you an escort up to the gates, but I can send you as far as your own people." "You will be good enough, sir," he continued, addressing himself to the officer, "to see this man and his sheep safe through our lines, and take care that no harm befalls him." The peasant was therefore conducted to the utmost verge of the English line of skirmishers, and there set adrift. Whether he fared as well among the French soldiers, I never heard; but it is pleasant to be able to record half a century after the event that not even the excitement of a battle in its progress caused the English general or his troops to forget what was due to the claims of humanity.

The weather, which had continued fine throughout the 10th, broke again on the 11th, and for several days the rain fell in torrents. Lord Wellington found himself constrained in consequence to halt, and by and by, as the only chance of preserving the health of his troops, to distribute them among the towns and villages near. His anxiety under these circumstances to save the people of the country from outrage, and to induce them to live in their own houses with the men whom he quartered upon them, was extreme. He invited all local magistrates to come to him, and assured them of protection. He caused hand-bills to be printed, and posted in the streets and against cottage walls, charging the inhabitants to arrest and bring before the nearest general officer any persons from whom they might suffer wrong; and he hanged upon the spot several soldiers, both English and Portuguese, who were taken in the act of marauding. With English and Portuguese this wise severity produced the desired effect. They understood the motives of their chief, and submitted to a discipline which was as politic as it was merciful. Not so the Spaniards. They asserted their right to do in France what French armies had done in Spain; and their generals had the folly to remonstrate against the measures taken to restrain them. "I did not come into France," wrote Lord Wellington to General Freyre, "to plunder. I have not been the means of killing and wounding thousands of officers and soldiers in order that the survivors should pillage the French. On the contrary,

it is my duty and the duty of us all, to prevent pillage, particularly if we wish that our armies should subsist upon the resources of the country."

Lord Wellington's expostulations failing to have any effect upon the Spanish officers, he at once dispensed with their services. The whole Spanish army, amounting to 20,000 men at least, was sent back across the Bidassoa. It was a strong measure, but he had well weighed the consequences before adopting it. "I must tell your lordship," he wrote to Lord Bathurst on the 21st of November, "that our success and everything depends upon our moderation and justice, and upon the good conduct and discipline of our troops. Hitherto these have behaved well, and there appears a new spirit among the officers, which I hope will continue, to keep the troops in order. But I despair of the Spaniards. They are in so miserable a state that it is really hardly fair to expect that they will refrain from plundering a beautiful country into which they enter as conquerors, particularly adverting to the miseries which their own country has suffered from the invaders. I cannot, therefore, venture to bring them back into France unless I can feed and pay them. If I could but bring forward 20,000 good Spaniards paid and fed, I should have Bayonne. If I could bring forward 40,000, I don't know where I should stop. Now I have both the 20,000 and the 40,000 at my command upon this frontier, but I cannot venture to bring forward any for want of means of paying and supplying them."

This was the last of his proceedings in 1813, for a time. The bad weather continued intermittingly. A temporary halt was converted into an enduring pause; and the troops, conceiving that they had entered into winter quarters, began to make themselves at home.

CHAPTER XXII

BATTLE OF THE NIVE—WINTER QUARTERS

Before I endeavour to give some account of life as it went on in winter quarters fifty years ago, it may not be amiss if, in as few words as possible, I tell the story here of the military operations which broke in upon the repose of the troops a month subsequently to the battle of Nivelle.

Constrained, as I have just shown, by a continuance of bad weather, Lord Wellington had quartered his people over a long line of country, measuring perhaps nine or ten miles from left to right, almost on the spots where each corps and division had halted. Head-quarters with the guards were well disposed of in St. Jean de Luz. The 5th division, with Lord Aylmer's brigade, filled all the hamlets and villages between that town and Bidard. The light division lay to the right of these in Arcanguez; and others succeeded, wending further and further to the right till they touched the river Nive. Thus all the country south as well as north of the Adour, which was remarkably fertile and rich in corn and cattle, remained, as far as the right bank of the Nive, in the hands of the enemy; who were able, likewise, to communicate through that district with certain posts which they still held in rear of the English right among the Lower Pyrenees. Now such a state of things was not agreeable to Lord Wellington, and on the 9th of December he moved out to put an end to it. While his right crossed the Nive, and closed upon the entrenched camp and the Adour, his centre and left made demonstrations, of which the sole object was to distract the enemy's attention, and to hinder them from falling on Hill with overwhelming numbers while cumbered with the passage of the Nive.

The affair of the 9th of December was nowhere serious. The enemy fell back, skirmishing, as the English advanced, and long before dark all was accomplished which Lord Wellington had in view. Hill, with the right column, 16,000 strong, commanded the rich country between the Adour and the Nive, and the other columns returned to sleep in their old quarters. But

Soult was far from being satisfied with what had occurred, and finding his opponent astride of a deep river, he endeavoured to strike him in detail. With this view he carried the great bulk of his people in the night of the 9th from that portion of the entrenched camp which faced Hill, and early in the morning of the 10th fell with extreme violence upon the left of the English army. The whole of that day, throughout the 11th, and again on the 12th, the battle raged. It was fought partly upon a plateau which intervenes between the sea and Arcanguez, partly along the ridges and slopes in which that plateau ends, and partly in and about the village of Arcanguez. The troops on both sides slept night after night upon their arms, so near the one line to the other, that the voices of men conversing round a French camp fire, and sometimes their words, could be overheard and understood by men sitting round their camp fire in the English lines.

The French fought well, but they made no progress. The ground which they gained on the morning of the 10th was wrested from them in the afternoon of the same day; and they never again recovered it. The English did not advance beyond their own plateau, because their battle was entirely a defensive one; and so, when the enemy, finding themselves foiled in their design, withdrew after dark on the 12th, and hurried off to attack Sir Rowland Hill, no attempt was made to push forward and surprise that portion of the entrenched camp which lay near Anglette. The attack upon Sir Rowland Hill failed as signally as the attack upon Sir John Hope, and a loss to the assailants of 10,000 men, in killed and wounded and prisoners, was all that Soult took by his motion.

It was during the progress of this action that there occurred that meeting, so to speak, between Lord Wellington and Marshal Soult, of which in another work I have made mention. There lay to the English right of a wood which screened the plateau of Biaritz, a narrow valley, with steep but low hills on either side. One of these ridges was held by French troops, while along the summit of the other, but thrown back so as to leave room for the enemy, should they take courage to ascend, stood the 85th regiment in line. The skirmishers on both sides were engaged in the narrow glen between; and the main bodies rested on their arms.

About noon, or a little later, a group of horsemen suddenly arrived on the French ridge. There could be no doubt as to their quality. It was a general officer of high rank, with a

numerous staff, who halted opposite to the 85th, well-nigh within long musket range, and immediately dismounted. He was a large man, and lame; and he leaned his telescope on the saddle, and closely examined the English position. While the attention of the officers of the 85th was turned towards the group, a clatter of horses' hoofs arose behind them; and Lord Wellington, also numerously attended, rode up. His glass was instantly pointed towards the opposite group, and he exclaimed aloud, "That's Soult, I recollect him perfectly. I saw him before at Sauroren." For three minutes, more or less, the two chiefs seemed to watch one another; then first one and then another French officer, and finally the whole cavalcade, put their horses in motion, and went away at a sharp pace in the direction of the English right. "That's it, is it?" cried Lord Wellington; and then addressing himself to the 85th, he said, "Now, lads, you must keep your ground; there's nothing behind you;" after which he faced about, and set off at a gallop, in the same direction which the French officers had taken. Nor were the results of these reconnaissances slow to appear. A furious fire of musketry and cannon told that Arcanguez was assailed. A wild hurrah, from the opposite ridge, served as a prelude to a rush, and in ten minutes the battle raged again with extreme violence. But no great while elapsed ere the woods in rear of both English posts were seen to glitter with the flash of a winter's sun on the bayonets of troops arriving. Soult's object was defeated, and the dead and wounded marked where they lay the route by which his troops had come on, and had again retreated.

I saw Lord Wellington again on the morning of the 13th, after the French finally withdrew from the combat. He was riding leisurely, from the right to the left of his own line, and stopped for a moment to converse with Colonel Thornton as he passed. All crowded round to listen, and as he was in excellent spirits, he greeted everybody very courteously. "They got an awful licking," were his words; "I don't think I ever saw so many dead crowded into such a narrow space. Hill must have disposed of 5000 of them, at the least." And then he rode away.

For two or three days longer, in order, no doubt, to make all secure, the troops remained in line of battle. They then broke up, and filed off, division by division, brigade by brigade, and regiment by regiment, to such cantonments as had been prepared for them. The outposts were taken by battalions in

succession, one of each brigade relieving the other at intervals of three days. These, except the pickets, slept under canvas three nights, and on the morning of the fourth day made over the tents and their responsibility to their successors. It is not, however, of them nor of the adventures which befell them that I need speak. My business lies rather with what went on in the rear of the outposts, where Lord Wellington and the head-quarters of the army had established themselves.

St. Jean de Luz is, or rather was half a century ago, a town of perhaps 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants; with its Mairie, its Hotel de Ville, its churches, its theatre, its square, or place d'armes, and its streets, some more, some less imposing, according to the style of the houses which lined it. The river Nivelle runs through the town, ending in a harbour and a quay, and is spanned by a bridge, which the French in their retreat had broken down, but which the English engineers speedily repaired. Almost all the inhabitants fled when the English first entered; but the fame of Lord Wellington's justice soon got abroad, and long before the 9th of December, not a few, including the mayor and municipality, had returned. Nothing could be more satisfactory than the terms on which those functionaries and the people in general lived with the invaders. Not only was no violence offered to them, but the mayor was a frequent guest at Lord Wellington's table; and the civil government of the town was carried on in his name, and according to the laws which he was accustomed to administer.

Three English generals, besides Lord Wellington, occupied houses in St. Jean de Luz. Sir John Hope, commanding the left column, who had been severely wounded in the battle of the Nive, was one of those, and the generals commanding the 1st and 5th divisions were the other two. All dispensed their hospitalities freely; but the Marquis's parties were, as may be supposed, the most sought after. In the first place, he kept by far the best table. It had not been always so; indeed, during the earlier campaigns, the duke seemed to be indifferent to this matter, almost to a fault; but latterly he took a different view of things. Not fewer than three cooks attended him; one a Frenchman, one an Englishman, one a Spaniard; and among them they certainly contrived to turn out dinners of which no connoisseur need have been ashamed. In the next place, his staff, whatever their merits as soldiers might have been, consisted of gentlemen, who lived with one another on the most affectionate terms, and were well-bred and kind to all who

approached them. They had many schoolboy tricks; among others, that of giving nicknames, at which nobody took offence. "Where is Slender Billy?" said Lord Fitzroy Somerset one day, looking round the table, and apparently missing somebody. "Here I am, Fitzroy," replied the Prince of Orange, "what do you want?" And so it was with Lord March, so with Lord Fitzroy, so with the duke himself, though in this last instance it must be confessed the soubriquet was never applied, except in the absence of the object of it. Yet even when the duke was present, these young men seldom scrupled to say and do whatever occurred to them: unless indeed a point of duty were concerned, and then he tolerated nothing out of the straight line of obedience. No doubt, conversation at the table of the commander of the forces laboured, like conversation at the table of the sovereign, under some restraints. All who sat there, that is to say, ordinary guests, waited till the cue was given, and were then content for the most part to follow, not to originate, discussion. Lord Wellington himself, on the contrary, seemed to give free utterance to whatever thought happened to pass through his mind. Whether home politics, or the affairs of Europe, or the state and prospects of his own army took his attention, out came his opinions with as much freedom as if he were discussing a stage-play or events in history.

"We were often amazed to hear you speak so freely, especially when the Mayor of Biaritz, or that other mysterious person, happened to be of the party."

"Oh, you took them for spies, I suppose, and thought that I ought to be very guarded before them. But why should I? It was a matter of indifference to me what they saw or heard. I got a good deal of information out of them which was useful to me. I didn't care what information they carried back to Soult, because I knew it would be of no use to him."

"You think, then, that they were double spies?"

"I am not quite prepared to say that of the Biaritz man, but about the other I never entertained a doubt. I knew that he was in Soult's pay as well as in mine. But I took care to let him know that I had it always in my power to test the intelligence which he brought me; and he soon ceased to bring any that was not true. The fact is, that spies abound in every camp. I was aware of many in mine, but as to hanging them, that never entered into my head. If I could not manage at all times to render their tittle-tattle worthless to the enemy, I should have been unfit to command an army."

queen's disparaging letters were circulated privately in Dublin, obtained he knew not how, but with fatal effect upon his influence. He had borne Elizabeth's caprices long enough. "For God's sake," he wrote angrily on the 15th of November, in answer to Cecil's letter, "for God's sake get my recall; the people here know what the queen thinks of me, and I can do no good." [1]

From these unprofitable bickerings the story must return to Colonel Randolph and the garrison of Derry. For some weeks after Sidney's departure all had gone on prosperously. The country people, though well paid for everything, were slow to bring in provisions; the bread ran short; and the men had been sent out poorly provided with shoes or tools or clothes. But foraging parties drove in sufficient beef to keep them in fresh meat. Randolph, who seems to have been a man of fine foresight, had sent to the English Pale for a supply of forage before the winter set in; he had written to England "for shirts, kerseys, canvas, and leather;" he kept Cecil constantly informed of the welfare and wants of the troops; [2] and for some time they were healthy and in high spirits, and either worked steadily at the fortress or were doing good service in the field.

While Sidney was in Connaught, Shan who had followed him to Lifford turned back upon the Pale, expecting to find it undefended. He was encountered by Sir Warham St. Leger, lost two hundred men, and was at first hunted back over the border. He again returned however with "a main army," burnt several villages, and in a second fight with St. Leger was more successful; the English were obliged to retire "for lack of more aid;" but they held together in good order, and Shan with the Derry garrison in his rear durst not follow far from home in pursuit. Before he could revenge himself on Sidney, before he could stir against the Scots, before he could strike a blow at O'Donnell, he must pluck out the barbed dart which was fastened in his unguarded side.

Knowing that he would find it no easy task, he was hovering cautiously in the neighbourhood of Lough Foyle, when Randolph fell upon him by surprise on the 12th of November. The O'Neils fled after a short, sharp action. O'Dogherty with his Irish horse chased the flying crowd, killing every man he caught, and Shan recovered himself to find he had lost four hundred men of the bravest of his followers. More fatal overthrow neither he

[1] *Irish MSS. Rolls House.*
[2] Edward Randolph to Cecil, October 27: *MS.* Ibid.

liquors and other articles such as soldiers were likely to purchase and consume on the spot.

Lord Wellington was anxious to conciliate the people by contributing to their amusements as well as by protecting their persons. With this view he caused the bands of regiments within reach to play from time to time in the Champs de Mars, and he encouraged his young men to get up balls. There was considerable difficulty at first in accomplishing the latter object. On consulting with the mayor it was found that very few ladies, and not many respectable shopkeepers' daughters, could be produced, and of English ladies only six were forthcoming. Now it would not do for the commander of the forces to throw open his own *salons*, and the result to be a failure. The mayor, therefore, undertook to play the part of host, and a dollar a-piece was charged as the price of admission, for gentlemen only. I cannot say that the success was great. About thirty elderly, and half as many young French ladies, made their appearance, each escorted by her maid, who carried a lantern before her; and our six fair country-women chimed in, though not very cordially. Of gentlemen, all arrayed in brilliant uniforms, not fewer than 200 were present; and among the rest the marquis himself. The music was good, and the dancing indifferent. Only one out of the six Englishwomen would or could waltz, and cotillions and country-dances flagged for lack of partners. One French beau volunteered a hornpipe, through which he got with great dexterity. Of the English beaux, the great bulk stood apart or drank freely, and then began to romp. Lord Wellington did not dance, and retired soon after midnight. On the whole the mayor's ball was pronounced to be a failure.

Though the mayor's ball did not succeed, the ball as an institution was far from passing into disrepute. Others followed, which though less select, perhaps, so far as the ladies were concerned, went off better. Theatricals were also attempted, but they lacked the spirit of those at Guinaldo and Frenada; for the Light Division were the great actors of the army, and they lay at a distance from St. Jean de Luz. On the whole, however, the winter passed very agreeably. Yet to Lord Wellington it was a season of ceaseless labour. If he but omitted for a single day to carry on his correspondence, letters accumulated to such an extent as would have deterred any other man from facing them. If, as more than once happened, he was detained from home for two or three days in succession, the arrears became frightful. On one of these occasions, after

some movements on the part of the French had called him suddenly away, and kept him three days with Lord Hill, the judge advocate-general entered his room with a bundle of papers, and saw him seated in front of a table covered with immense piles of unopened letters. "What have you got?" demanded the marquis, looking up. "Only some cases for your lordship to consider, and a few sentences to confirm." "Take them away," cried the marquis, raising his hand, and bringing it before his eyes, "take them away, and put them where you will, only don't expect me to look at them now."

It was in the course of this winter that the Bourbons and their partisans began to entertain hopes of that restoration which ultimately took place. The first of the emigrés who showed himself at head-quarters was the Comte de Grammont —a gentleman in manners and appearance, and the representative of a long line of landed proprietors in this part of the country. Everybody treated him with respect, and he was a constant guest at Lord Wellington's table. By and by came the Duc d'Angoulême, not openly avowed, but under an assumed name, and it is fair to add that neither by his manners nor by his appearance was he so successful in conciliating public opinion as the Comte de Grammont. A short, rather mean-looking man, with a strongly-marked Bourbon cast of countenance, and endless grimaces, as he entered or quitted a room, he often put the gravity of Lord Wellington's staff and guests sorely to the test. It was the fashion in the marquis's household to call all the strangers who came to head-quarters, Tigers; and the Duc d'Angoulême got at once the soubriquet of "the Royal Tiger."

The Duc d'Angoulême added by his presence not a little to Lord Wellington's embarrassments. There was, in point of fact, no Bourbon party in the Basque provinces of France in those days. All men were sick of the empire, with its desolating wars and cruel taxation, but the Bourbons were as much forgotten, except by a few old people, as if they had never reigned. It was not easy to convince them or their followers of that fact, far less to reconcile them to the possible conclusion of a peace which should not provide for their return to power. Now, Lord Wellington, though always courteous and delicate before the Duc d'Angoulême, would never consent to have it appear that he was fighting for the restoration of an exiled family. He contemplated to the last the probability of coming to terms with Napoleon; and in his correspondence with the government

at home, spoke of the arrangement as in itself not to be condemned. "If we can persuade Buonaparte to be moderate, he is perhaps the best ruler of France that we could get." The Duc d'Angoulême, on the other hand, urged an immediate proclamation of Louis XVIII.; and because of his opposition to so wild a scheme, both now and at a subsequent period, the duke incurred, and never afterwards lost, the personal dislike of the whole Bourbon family.

While the Bourbons thus advocated a policy purely selfish, the English Government, on the suggestion of the Emperor of Russia, proposed to Lord Wellington a choice of plans, either to transfer himself and the British portion of his army to the Netherlands, leaving the war in the south to be carried on by the Spaniards and Portuguese; or, if that were considered unadvisable, to push forward in the depth of winter, and operate thereby a strong diversion in favour of the allies. His answer would be imperfectly given except in his own words. Writing on the 21st of December, 1813, to Lord Bathurst, he says, "In military operations there are some things which cannot be done: one of these is, to move troops in this country during, or immediately after, a violent fall of rain. I believe I shall lose many more men than I shall ever replace by putting my troops in camp in this bad weather; but I should be guilty of a useless waste of men, if I were to attempt an operation during the violent falls of rain which we have here. Our operations, then, must necessarily be slow; but they shall not be discontinued. In regard to the scene of the operations of the army, it is a question for the government, and not for me. By having kept in the field about 30,000 men in the Peninsula, the British Government have now, for five years, given employment to 200,000 French troops, of the best Napoleon had, as it is ridiculous to suppose that either the Spaniards or Portuguese could have resisted for a moment if the British force had been withdrawn. The enemy now employed against us cannot be less than 100,000 men; indeed more including garrisons, and I see in the French newspapers that orders have been given for the formation at Bourdeaux of an army of reserve of 100,000 men. Is there any one weak enough to suppose that one third of the numbers first mentioned would be employed against the Spaniards and Portuguese, if we were withdrawn? The other observation which I have to submit is, that in a war in which every day offers a crisis, the results of which may affect the world for ages, the change of the scene of the operations of the

British army would put that army entirely *hors de combat* for four months at least, even if the new scene were Holland; and they would not then be such a machine as this army is. Your lordship, however, very reasonably asks what objects we propose to ourselves here, which are to induce Napoleon to make peace? I am now in a commanding situation on the most vulnerable frontier of France, probably the only vulnerable frontier. If I could put 20,000 Spaniards into the field, which I could do if I had money, and was properly supported by the fleet, I must have the only fortress there is on this frontier, if it can be called a fortress, and that in a very short space of time. If I could put 40,000 Spaniards into the field, I should probably have my posts on the Garonne. Does any man suppose that Napoleon would not feel an army in such a position more than he would feel 30,000 or 40,000 British troops laying siege to one of his fortresses in Holland? If it be only the resources of men and money of which he will be deprived, and the reputation he will lose by our being in this position, it will do ten times more to procure peace than ten armies on the side of Flanders."

Arguments such as these, put with the force of Lord Wellington's high authority, could not be controverted. The English Government left him to move when he judged that the proper time had come. It abandoned also the wild scheme of transferring him and his troops to Flanders; but it overlooked his indirect entreaty for means to bring forward an effective Spanish army, and it weakened him by sending to Holland Sir Thomas Graham with a force which would have been far better employed under his immediate orders. The effects of this mistaken policy were felt in the ensuing campaign, of which I shall now proceed to give a brief outline.

nor any other Irish chief had yet received at English hands. But the success was dearly bought; Colonel Randolph himself leading the pursuit was struck by a random shot and fell dead from his horse. The Irish had fortunately suffered too severely to profit by his loss. Shan's motley army, held together as it was by the hope of easily-bought plunder, scattered when the service became dangerous. Sidney allowing him no rest struck in again beyond Dundalk, burning his farms and capturing his castles.[1] The Scots came in over the Bann, wasting the country all along the river side. Allaster M'Connell like some chief of Sioux Indians sent to the captain of Knockfergus an account of the cattle that he had driven, and "the wives and bairns" that he had slain.[2] Like swarms of angry hornets these avenging savages drove their stings into the now maddened and desperate Shan, on every point where they could fasten; while in December the old O'Donnell came out over the mountains from Donegal, and paid back O'Neil with interest for his stolen wife, his pillaged country, and his own long imprisonment and exile. The tide of fortune had turned too late for his own revenge: worn out with his long sufferings he fell from his horse at the head of his people with the stroke of death upon him; but before he died he called his kinsmen about him and prayed them to be true to England and their queen, and Hugh O'Donnell who succeeded to his father's command went straight to Derry and swore allegiance to the English crown.

Tyrone was now smitten in all its borders. Magennis was the last powerful chief who still adhered to Shan's fortunes; the last week in the year Sidney carried fire and sword through his country and left him not a hoof remaining. It was to no purpose that Shan, bewildered by the rapidity with which disasters were piling themselves upon him, cried out now for pardon and peace, the deputy would not answer his letter, and "nothing was talked of but his extirpation by war only."[3]

A singular tragedy interrupted for a time the tide of English success, although the first blows had been struck by so strong a hand that Shan could not rally from them. The death of Randolph had left the garrison at Derry as—in the words of one of them—a headless people.[4] Food and clothing fell short, and

[1] Sidney to the Lords of the Council, December 12: *Irish MSS. Rolls House.*

[2] Allaster M'Connell to the Captain of Knockfergus; enclosed in a letter of R. Piers to Sir H. Sidney, December 15: *MS.* Ibid.

[3] Sidney to the English Council, January 18: *MS.* Ibid.

[4] Geoffrey Vaughan to Admiral Winter, December 18: *MS.* Ibid.

safe, and drew off his troops, except about 12,000 men, to meet and restrain the English on his left. Of the marches and partial encounters which took place upon and below the many streams which rise in the Pyrenees, and flow into the Adour, I must leave the general historian to tell. They were at once trying and deeply interesting to such as took part in them; and they led to the concentration of two corps of almost equal strength on either bank of the Gave de Pau where it flows in front of Orthez. Soult carried into that position about 40,000 men, whom he placed along a range of heights, with St. Bois on his left and Orthez on his right. Lord Wellington faced him, with a force somewhat superior in cavalry and guns, but in infantry rather inferior. And on the 28th the battle was fought. It was long and obstinately contested—appearing at one time to go so much against the English, that Soult wrote a despatch from the field preparing the French minister of war for tidings of a victory. But Lord Wellington suddenly changed his order of battle, and attacking a point which was supposed to be out of reach of danger, broke through the enemy's line, and doubled it up. The French retired at first in good order, carrying their artillery with them—but from all sides the victors poured in, and the retreat became little better than a rout. Six pieces of cannon, with many prisoners, remained in the hands of the victors.

While these things were going on upon the English right, Sir John Hope with the left of the army, manœuvred to keep the garrison of Bayonne, and of the entrenched camp, from interrupting the great work which he had in hand. The fleet of coasters put to sea, and after much delay, occasioned by a succession of adverse gales, they passed the bar at the mouth of the Adour, and began to take their proper stations. Meanwhile above 600 men were thrown across in rafts, while a battery of eighteen-pounders drove on shore a flotilla of smaller craft, and forced a corvette, which kept guard beside the town, to move up the stream, and seek shelter under the guns of the citadel. And then followed that series of operations which placed Bayonne in a state of siege, while it opened a communication between St. Jean de Luz and the right bank of the Adour. Thus Lord Wellington's army became of necessity divided. About 20,000, including two corps of Spaniards, remained with Sir John Hope, while the residue, not now exceeding 60,000 at the most, closed up in pursuit of Soult, till circumstances again led to their further subdivision.

Driven from his strong position near Orthez, Soult directed the retreat of his army upon St. Sever. This, though a difficult, was a wise proceeding; for the road to Bordeaux, which was more open to him, could not have been held—Lord Wellington following sharply. In this case the only resource left for Soult would have been a march into the Llandes; where, if he escaped destruction from the enemy's superior cavalry, he must have been entirely cut off from communicating with Suchet, or receiving reinforcements from the interior. On the other hand, by taking the road to St. Sever, he brought himself at the close of every march nearer to the army of Catalonia; and he had already, with commendable forethought, prepared another fortified field of battle at Toulouse. Fortune so far favoured him, likewise, that the rains, which had ceased for a while, set in again heavily, amid the pelting of which Lord Wellington followed him as far as Sault-Navaille. There, in consequence of the failure of light, the English halted; and, next day, continued the pursuit in three distinct columns. The centre, marching upon St. Sever, crossed the Adour, unopposed. The left made for Mount de Marsan, where it took possession of a large magazine of provisions. Hill, with the right, overtook Clausel at Aire, and immediately attacked him. It was a sharp encounter; but it ended in the overthrow of the French, who retreated across the Adour, abandoning the town. With this passage of arms, the pursuit came to an end. All the bridges on all the rivers in front were broken down. The rivers themselves rose to flood; and the roads, and especially the by-paths, became difficult for the passage of guns, and quite impracticable for the pontoon train. Lord Wellington was thus reduced to a state of comparative inactivity, of which Soult availed himself, with his usual ability, to restore order in his ranks, and to gather in as many conscripts as could be collected from the districts round him.

It is impossible to contemplate the course of these events, taking into account the nature of the country, and the extent of space over which military operations were spread, without being struck with the consummate ability which Lord Wellington as a tactician exhibited throughout. In sixteen days he had effected the passage of five great and many smaller rivers. He had forced the enemy to abandon two *têtes-de-pont*, and numerous works of less importance. He had fought with success one great and two minor battles; taken six pieces of cannon, and 5000 prisoners. He had seized the magazines at Dax, Aire,

and Mont de Marsan; thrown a bridge over the mouth of the Adour; and besides investing St. Jean Pied-de-Port, and other lesser fotresses, now in his rear, he had placed Bayonne, the bulwark of France on this side, in a state of siege. Finally, he had compelled Soult to uncover Bordeaux, and retreat from the Adour before effecting a junction with the army of Catalonia. His force was, in the aggregate, doubtless superior to that which Soult could now oppose to him. But on no occasion, when the armies met, either collectively or in detachments, was the scale more than turned, and that very lightly, on either side. By this time, however, the French army laboured under that depression of moral courage to which all troops become subject after frequent defeats. Physically brave, Frenchmen cannot cease to be. To the last they fought stoutly, when face to face with the English. But they fought, or believed that they fought, the losing game; and on that account, as much as through the superior gallantry of their assailants, they lost it. Besides, they were out-generaled on every occasion, and on every occasion expected to be out-generaled. While Soult was considering the use to which he might best turn some temporary advantage, Lord Wellington, as in the battle of Orthez, changed his plan; and by a fresh attack, where no attack was anticipated, converted defeat into victory. Unfriendly critics blame Lord Wellington for losing time in his pursuit of the enemy, whom he had beaten. But critics, whether friendly or the reverse, overlook the fact that Lord Wellington sought at this time, not to make a mere inroad into France, but firmly to establish himself there. It was necessary, therefore, that he should render his presence, and that of his army, as little as possible offensive to the people. Hence, to move without his supplies, and thus be driven to subsist by requisitions, was an extremity to which he would never consent to be reduced. Besides, he had great political objects before him; and these he believed that he would most effectually subserve by adopting that course which after experience proved to have been, even in a purely military point of view, the most judicious.

The south of France was greatly agitated at this time. Weary of the war, and of the miseries which it brought upon them, the people had become weary, also, of the existing government. But they were by no means at one in desiring the restoration of the old family, though the old family had its partisans. It was necessary that Lord Wellington should deal tenderly by these feelings; neither absolutely rejecting the

advances of the Bourbon party, nor absolutely declaring for a revolution which might never take effect. He steered his course with as much of wisdom as of firmness. In Bordeaux, for example, loyalty to the Bourbons was said to be almost universal. He determined to give it a chance, by marching thither a corps, which, if it effected no other purpose, might open for him the Lower Garonne. To Marshal Beresford, however, whom he employed on this service, he gave strict orders not on any account to provoke a revolution. Should the authorities of their own accord proclaim Louis XVIII., he was to offer no hindrance to the arrangement; but he was to avoid the very appearance of suggesting, or even of officially supporting it. Bordeaux, like every other town and district occupied by the allied troops, must, so long as hostilities continued, be governed by magistrates deriving their authority from the commander of the invading army. At the same time open hostility to the government of Napoleon was to be proclaimed, and magistrates and people equally assured, that whatever domestic arrangements France might prefer, would be accepted by the allies, provided they brought peace to Europe.

This policy, though, in point of fact, more favourable to their pretensions than one of open partisanship, proved the reverse of satisfactory to the Bourbon princes. The Duc d'Angoulême protested against it, and demanded, as representing the king, his uncle, authority to unfurl the white flag, and to administer the affairs of the conquered country. He was respectfully, but firmly reminded, that, till the allied sovereigns should cease to treat Napoleon as the ruler of France, the general of their armies could not presume to recognise any other ruler. At the same time the duc was not discouraged from gathering his adherents about him; and arrangements were made for supplying them with arms, should arms be required. Meanwhile, however, everything was done which prudence and humanity dictated, to establish between the invaders and the invaded the best understanding. With English and Portuguese regiments strict discipline prevailed. Brigandage was unknown, and for individual acts of outrage, when they occurred, severe retribution was exacted. For example, having called upon the people, by proclamation, to protect themselves, Lord Wellington applauded certain peasants, who, in resisting an attempt to plunder their village, shot one British soldier, and brought another to head-quarters. The latter Lord Wellington executed on the spot. Indeed, he went further; for on one

occasion he sent home, in disgrace, an officer of rank, because he had permitted his men to destroy the communal archives of a small town. The consequence was, that the English soon became honoured guests in the houses of French families, and that the Portuguese were, at least, not disliked. It was more difficult to deal with the Spaniards. They soon returned to their old habits, which threatened at one moment to bring about very serious results. "Maintain," wrote Lord Wellington to General Freyre, "the strictest discipline, without which we are lost." And again, writing to Morillo, he expresses himself thus: "I have lost 20,000 men in this campaign; but it was not in order that General Morillo, or anybody else, should come in and plunder the French peasantry; as long as I command I will not permit it; if they wish to plunder they must find another chief. It is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether I command a large army or a small one; but whether great or small, it must obey me, and above all, it must not plunder."

It is curious to observe how entirely this line of policy, with all the results arising out of it, was Lord Wellington's policy, and his only. The northern powers condemned it; the Bourbons clamoured against it; and his own government urged him to modify it, in order that France might, at all events, be divided against itself. He never approved of the procedure, but he so far yielded to the pressure from without as to issue, about this time, two proclamations, inviting the French people to declare against Napoleon. "Come," he said, in one of these, "and rally under the banner of your legitimate prince:" in the other, after contrasting the rival dynasties and their principles of action, he promises, in the event of a return to legitimacy, "No more tyranny, no more war, no more conscriptions, no more vexatious imposts." And the proclamations were not without effect. Men received them as an appeal which was the more deserving of attention, because it came to them from one who had rendered himself respected, almost beloved, by the equity and gentleness of his own proceedings. Indeed, it is not going too far to say, that the revolution in public opinion, which began at this time to become perceptible in the South of France, turned much less upon the prestige of a dethroned royalty than upon the wisdom and moderation of the English general. We find this truth not obscurely indicated in a letter written at the time from Bayonne. "The wise conduct of the English general, and the excellent discipline

which he maintains among his troops, do us more harm than the loss of battles. All the peasantry desire to place themselves under his protection." In the same spirit Soult expressed himself when complaining of the frequent desertions of his soldiers, and the impossibility of effecting a general rising against the invader. "I shall not be surprised," he wrote to the minister of war, "to see the inhabitants of these districts soon taking up arms against us." M. Brialmont has well described the state of things in the following words:—"With an energy and a patriotism which were too rare at that period, Soult made incredible efforts to re-establish public opinion; and called upon the French to defend at least the soil of their country against foreign armies. "Let us show ourselves Frenchmen," he cried, "and die with arms in our hands, rather than survive our dishonour." Vain hope! the government of Napoleon, like other tyrannies, had enervated men's character, and substituted for true patriotism a species of national vanity, which could be gratified only by the prestige of victory. At the first reverse the feeling evaporated, and the French people, amid the clouds of smoke which obscured the soil of Europe, saw only their own blood uselessly shed, their families wasted away, their goods taken from them, their happiness destroyed. However legitimate might be these subjects of regret, whatever amount of blame might attach to Napoleon, it is still impossible not to admire the heroic bands, the slaves of duty and honour, who, up to the last moment, gathered round the tricoloured flag. Entire devotion to a cause, even if it be unjust, inspires greater respect than defection, sanctioned, though it be, by important considerations of state."

CHAPTER XXIV

ADVANCE TO TOULOUSE—BATTLE OF TOULOUSE—SORTIE FROM BAYONNE—CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES

HAVING extricated his army from the danger which threatened it, Soult halted between Maubeurguet and Rubastein, in a position which enabled him to cover Tarbes, and to watch the development of his adversary's designs. The English, he persuaded himself, must of necessity move, either upon Bordeaux or Toulouse. If they took the former route, he, as his letters show, was prepared to throw himself upon their rear; if the latter, then he hoped that he should be able seriously to disturb their left. He seems never to have contemplated the probability of their attempting both objects at the same time; he, therefore, took no steps to prevent it. Yet such was Lord Wellington's plan. Weakening himself to the extent of 12,000 English and Portuguese troops, he detached Beresford on the 8th with the 4th and 7th divisions, and Vivian's light dragoons, to take possession of Bordeaux, while with the remainder, consisting of the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and light divisions, and the bulk of the cavalry, he himself stood fast at Aire, ready to take advantage of any false move into which his adversary might be hurried.

And here there befell one of those contingencies which are not very frequent in war, but on which, when they do occur, the success of campaigns almost always turns. Their sources of intelligence failed both Lord Wellington and Soult. Each received exaggerated reports of the strength of the other; each believed what he heard, and was guided by it. Lord Wellington, convinced that Suchet had joined Soult, abstained from molesting him in Beresford's absence; Soult, unacquainted with the fact of Beresford's march, was content to maintain a purely defensive attitude. At last, however, on the 12th Soult took the initiative. Orders had reached him from Paris to move upon Pau, so that his left might rest upon the Pyrenees; and he now pushed forward between Aire and Garlin, hoping to

strike a blow against one or other of the somewhat scattered divisions of the allies. But Lord Wellington was not to be surprised. His troops closed rapidly in, and for three days the hostile armies faced one another. On the 16th, however, Soult heard of the capture of Bordeaux by Beresford, and labouring under the impression that his adversary had been strongly reinforced (though, in truth, the only troops which joined him were Freyre's corps of 8000 Spaniards, and they came up on the 13th and 14th), he became alarmed for his own communications, and retreated before dawn by St. Gaudens towards Toulouse.

While these things were going on along the course of the Upper Adour, Marshal Beresford effected his purpose at Bordeaux. The French garrison retired as he approached, and the magistracy and people received him with open arms. It was to no purpose that, acting on Lord Wellington's instructions, he advised the authorities to pause before committing themselves; the loyalty of the mayor could not be restrained, and Louis XVIII. was proclaimed, amid the wildest rejoicing. The forts which commanded the navigation of the river still, however, held out, and the means at Beresford's disposal were not, upon investigation, considered adequate to the reduction of the most important of them. But the only inconvenience arising out of this circumstance was, that the estuary of the Garonne could not, as yet, be used as a harbour for the British fleet; an arrangement for which, till the army should be more advanced, there was no very urgent necessity.

Satisfied with what had been done, and believing that one infantry division, with a few squadrons of horse, would suffice to maintain order in Bordeaux, Lord Wellington directed Marshal Beresford to return with the rest to his old position on the Adour. He had previously instructed General Clinton in Catalonia to break up his force altogether, and to send to him, through the valley of the Ebro, 4000 of the best of his infantry. Neither this detachment, however, nor others, which were on the move by sea and land, from Lisbon and from England, arrived in time to take part in the operations which he meditated. Soult had retired on the 16th; Beresford came in late on the 17th; and at an early hour on the 18th the advance began.

It was Lord Wellington's object to throw himself, by a rapid march, into the valley of the Adour, and to bar against the French the great road leading from Tarbes to St. Gaudens and Toulouse. Soult had anticipated the danger, and now occupied not only Tarbes itself, but Vic-de-Bigorre, a small town distant

from Tarbes about three leagues. With the corps which held that place, the English advanced guard became engaged on the 19th, and forced it to retire. Next day the allies, moving as they had heretofore done, in two columns, had a second affair at and around Tarbes, where the left, under Hill, found itself confronted by d'Erlon's, Clausel's, and Reille's divisions. The allies were again successful, but the enemy escaped, because the pursuers, encumbered with their bridge-train, and a long array of baggage animals, were unable to cut in upon the fugitives at Trie, and to head them in the plains of Muret. Indeed, herein lay the great hindrance to Lord Wellington throughout the whole of his campaign in the South of France. The innumerable rivers with which the country is intersected were all passable at will by the defending army. So long as they ran in Soult's rear the bridges remained; but the moment Soult crossed, he broke the bridges down; thus interposing between him and his pursuers obstacles which would have proved insurmountable, had not Lord Wellington carried with him the necessary appliances for repairing them. And so with respect to supplies of forage and provisions. Moving through a country where, for political reasons, it was essential to conciliate, and, as much as possible, to spare the inhabitants, his commissariat mules were, to the leader of the allied troops, as necessary as his guns. The enemy, on the other hand, divested themselves of all impediments. They compelled each district as they arrived in it to feed them, and they pressed, without scruple, cattle and horses for draft, as often as they were required. Hence they could not well fail to out-march their pursuers, and to choose from time to time their points of resistance. The consequence was that Soult arrived in Toulouse three whole days before Lord Wellington; an interval of the greatest possible importance to him, and which he did not fail, with his usual sagacity, to turn to good account.

The selection of Toulouse as the point on which he should retire, indicated both talent and resolution on the part of Soult. It gave him the command of several lines of operation; such as by Carcassonne towards Suchet, or by Alby upon Lyons, while it placed him in the best possible attitude for watching the schemes of the Legitimatists, and maintaining the authority of the existing government. Covered on three sides by the canal of Languedoc, and on the fourth by the Garonne, the town itself was surrounded within these barriers by an old wall, which, having towers at intervals, was capable of offering serious resist-

ance, except to heavy artillery. Soult displayed great engineering skill in improving these defences. He converted the canal, from the point where it falls into the Garonne as far up as the bridge of Demoiselles, into an outer line. This line protected the Carcassonne road, by which a junction between himself and Suchet could be effected, whether the latter should decide on operating a diversion in his favour from Catalonia, or that both should retire upon Beziers.

The canal of Languedoc lay, for a considerable space, within musket-shot of the town wall. It could everywhere be swept by cannon. But further to the north-east, between it and the river Ers, runs a range of heights, called Mount Rave. These Soult fortified by throwing up, at convenient distances, five redoubts, and connecting them with retrenchments. On the south-west side, with the Garonne flowing between, stood the faubourg of St. Cyprien, which, like the town, was defended by an old wall, and served all the purposes of a *tête-de-pont*. Thus was constructed an entrenched camp of the most formidable kind, of which Toulouse itself may be described as the citadel, every avenue of approach being covered by field-works, and protected by a numerous artillery.

From this position, which he not unnaturally regarded as impregnable, Soult wrote to Suchet, imploring him to forget everything, except the condition of their country, and to come to his support. It was the last appeal, and it met with no response. Suchet pleading that he had not 3000 men disposable, though, in point of fact, he could muster 13,000, refused to give up his separate command, and Soult was left with his own army and the division of General Paris to wage such a war as he could. Yet, even unassisted from Catalonia, he cannot be said to have stood at great disadvantage towards his adversary. His position was excellent. The muster-rolls of his army show that he had 39,160 combatants under arms, and that his artillery amounted to 80 pieces. Lord Wellington, on the other hand, was able to bring against him only 45,000 infantry, of whom 15,000 were Spaniards, with 6000 cavalry and 64 guns. Whatever the English general might gain, therefore, by mere excess of numbers, he more than lost, partly in the composition of his infantry, partly in the difficulties of the ground on which he was about to operate. It was, in every point of view, a fair fight, the assailants having, indeed, a harder part to play in it than the defenders.

Lord Wellington moving slowly, as the state of the roads com-

pelled him to do, arrived on the 26th in sight of Toulouse. The enemy drew in their outposts on his approach, and took post behind the Garonne and the Lers. It was the first intention of the English general to pass the Garonne above the town, and thereby to interpose between Soult and Montauban. Indeed, Sir Rowland Hill's corps was actually thrown across in the night, just above the junction of the Ariêge with the Garonne, and directed to march upon Cintegabelle, where there was a bridge upon the latter stream. But the melting of the snow in the mountains, together with the heavy rains of the past week, had so filled the marshes which lie between the Garonne and the Ariêge that to move even infantry through them, far more cavalry and guns, proved impossible. Hill was, in consequence, recalled, and another point of attack chosen. It was nearer to the town, though still on the left of the enemy's position, at a place called Portet. There, however, on trying them, the pontoons proved to be of insufficient span; and Soult, warned by the attempt, threw up works to avert the danger. Nothing now remained, except to assault the heights between the Ers and the canal, and as a preliminary step, to force the passage of the Garonne below the town.

I must refer the curious in such matters to the larger edition of this work, for a detail of the manœuvres which preceded and led up to the battle of Toulouse. They were executed in spite of the hindrances which ceaseless rains and roads well-nigh impassable offer to the movement of troops. But determination and perseverance overcame them all, and on the 10th of April the fight began. It was maintained on both sides with greater obstinacy than any other which had occurred since the opening of the war. Confident in the strength of their position, and well supported by the fire of a superior artillery, the French disputed every inch of ground, and when the evening closed were still in possession of the town, and of the line of the canal. But the redoubts which commanded the town had fallen, and Soult knew that his game was lost. On the other hand the English had expended the whole of their great-gun ammunition, and till supplies could be brought up from the rear, an operation which required time, they were not in a state to renew an offensive battle. Favoured by this circumstance, Soult was able in the course of the 11th to send away such baggage as could be moved without attracting attention, and the same night he withdrew by the only road which lay open to him, leaving, besides his wounded, all his heavy cannon and stores,

with a considerable depôt of small arms, to become the prey of the conquerors.

Lord Wellington fought the battle of Toulouse upon a plan which as much as possible guarded the inhabitants from becoming more than spectators of the horrors of war. Not a shot or shell from an English gun fell within the town. And now his arrangements were made for investing the place, so as to compel the French army either to come out and fight, or else to lay down its arms. His troops, indeed, had begun to move towards the single carriage road of which they were not already masters, when daybreak on the 12th made the fact apparent, that Soult and his people were gone. Not a picket guard stood to their arms, not a sentry showed himself; and presently, while men yet wondered what the cause of such unlooked-for silence might be, the silence was broken by the pealing of bells in the city. Suddenly upon every tower and housetop visible a white flag was seen to wave, and by and by the air rang with the shouts of people rejoicing. Toulouse, freed from the presence of Napoleon's garrison, declared for Louis XVIII., and the British troops were greeted as they drew near, not as enemies, but as deliverers.

With the battle of Toulouse the great Peninsular War may be said to have come to an end. At Bayonne, indeed, four days later, a profitless encounter took place, the garrison making a sortie, by which they gained nothing, and some valuable lives on both sides were sacrificed. And in the Upper Garonne and on the borders of Catalonia, Soult and Suchet hesitated before they could bring themselves to believe the truth; but Lord Wellington's firmness and the preparations which he made to resume hostilities overcame their scruples. They sent in their adhesion to the new order of things, and there was peace everywhere.

In describing these operations I have referred as yet only to the public acts of the great mover in them, and to the consequences of these acts. Let us not bring this chapter to a close without detailing one or two incidents which seem to me to throw a good deal of light upon the character of the Duke of Wellington as a man as well as an officer.

The idea of bridging the estuary of the Adour with *chasse-marées* and schooners sent in from the sea, was entirely his own. The engineer officers whom he consulted on the subject condemned it. And even Admiral Penrose and his gallant captains pronounced the scheme hazardous to a degree. "If

you get the vessels over the Bar," demanded the former, "whence are we to procure planking?" "Haven't you just got from England a quantity of timber, sawed, and ready for laying platforms?" "Certainly," was the answer, "but that we shall require for our batteries." "Nonsense, take the platform timber for the bridge, we must have the bridge before we can begin the siege of Bayonne." "And what are we to do afterwards?" "There's plenty of pinewood near Bayonne; you can cut and saw that, and till it is ready the guns must be worked on the sand." And sure enough to the purposes of the bridge the new platforms were applied, without any hindrance or mischief arising in the course of future operations.

Lord Wellington's conduct on this occasion reminds me of the promptitude and decision with which, at the siege of Ciudad-Rodrigo, he applied a sudden remedy to a pressing want. It was necessary, in order to break ground for the trenches, to *brusque* a lunette, which crowned the great Teso hill. There were no ladders at hand wherewith to escalade, and the engineer told him so, and asked for time. "How much time do you want?" "If we had the wood, a few hours would suffice, but we have nothing of which to make either side pieces or rounds!" "What are those carts that I see there? there seem to be some hundreds of them." "They are the country carts on which the spare ammunition was brought up from Almeida." "Very well, take them. You see that you have the side pieces ready made to your hand in the beams and shafts, the rounds you can easily make out of the boarding." The fitness of the project was acknowledged as soon as expressed, and that same night the lunette was carried by means of ladders improvised out of a few bullock-carts.

With respect to Admiral Penrose and his brother officers, they argued reasonably enough, that the Bar alone presented an obstacle which was not to be surmounted in all weathers, and that, granting it to be surmounted, an enemy in possession of one bank of a river must be very remiss indeed if he failed to render the anchorage too hot for such craft as were about to approach it. "I have no fear," was Lord Wellington's answer, "but that your fellows will carry the craft over the Bar, and depend upon it I'll take care that nothing hurts them afterwards." And so it was. A battalion of guards seized the right bank, while a field-battery of eighteen-pounders held the left, and the craft took up their stations, and the bridge was

constructed without the slightest damage done, except by the accidents of navigation.

Lord Wellington's personal activity, especially at the opening of this campaign, astonished even the members of his staff, who knew him best. He rode over and over again from one extremity of his line to another, as much as sixty or seventy miles, and back again, with scarcely a halt. He ate his meals more than once by the wayside, and not unfrequently fasted from dawn till late at night. His aversion to the pomp and circumstance in which the generals of other armies delight, he sometimes carried to a fault. His famous ride, for example, from Gacis to the site of the bridge of boats on the Adour, carried him through a country which was by no means safe, yet he performed it without an escort, Lord Fitzroy alone attending him. Indeed, escorts he entirely rejected except when engaged in the act of reconnoitring close to the enemy's position. More than once he had, in consequence, a narrow escape for his life. When the enemy were falling back from the Gave d'Oleron to Orthez, he shot ahead of his own advanced guard, and made for a hill, whence he conceived that he should command a full view of their line of march. Colonel Gordon, Lord Fitzroy, and several other officers were with him, but no escort. Gordon happened to be well mounted, and rode a little ahead of the rest, by which means he gained the brow of the hill while Lord Wellington was yet a yard or two from the summit. Right in his teeth came a party of French cavalry whom he had just time to escape by wheeling round and galloping back. Down came the troopers upon Gordon, and away went Lord Wellington and his staff, their swords out, but trusting more to the speed of their horses than to their right arms. And by the speed of their horses alone they escaped.

On the other hand, this habit of passing from point to point well-nigh like a private person, gave him opportunities of seeing with his own eyes what might have been hidden from him had he approached the point of vision in a crowd. He was extremely anxious about his pontoon bridge during the days of preparation which led up to the battle of Toulouse. And perhaps his anxiety on that head was not the less keen, that in consequence of some changes of construction proposed by himself, the pontoons did not appear to possess the same amount of flotation which had previously belonged to them. Twice the bridge was carried away; once, when tried, it proved too short for the span of the river, and once it sank with the weight of a heavy gun.

Of the point where these attempts had been made the French became naturally jealous, and more than one working and covering party was driven off by a heavy fire from the other side. Lord Wellington became impatient, and down he went, absolutely alone, to reconnoitre. He had justly calculated the chances. A French sentry immediately fired, but missed him, whereupon a French officer, seeing only one man, and not observing about him anything to indicate that he was of superior rank, ran down to the river-side and apologised for the outrage in words which the duke often repeated afterwards with great glee, "Pardon, Monsieur, c'est un noveau." The kindness was acknowledged, and the two entered into conversation, which Lord Wellington kept up till he had seen and comprehended all that he was desirous of looking into. He then raised his hat and went away, to turn the knowledge which he had thus acquired to excellent account.

The bridge being at length laid, and two divisions, under Beresford, sent across, a fresh came on in the night, and to save the pontoons from being carried away, the engineers were obliged to remove some of them. This rendered the passage impracticable for horses, and not very safe for men; indeed it was only one by one that individuals could cross at all. Lord Wellington, bent upon reconnoitring Soult's inner line, passed the bridge when it was in this state. He went on foot and he went alone. A troop horse was furnished to him on the other side, and he thus took a survey of the enemy's position.

"Was not Beresford in great danger then, and you also, duke?" "No, there was no danger. Soult ought to have attacked us, I allow, but we were in a condition to put our back to the river, and he could not have done us any harm."

Those who saw the duke pass, as I have just described, were not of that opinion at the moment, and their satisfaction was proportionately great, when he returned the same evening, and they heard him tell over his own dinner-table how the troop-horse had carried him.

The style of his arrival in Toulouse itself, on the morning of the 12th, when the retreat of Soult's army became known, was entirely in keeping with all that went before. While the maire and municipal body, followed by an enormous crowd, waited at one gate to receive him with all due honour, Lord Wellington rode round to another, with a single aide-de-camp in his train, and entered unnoticed. He made for the Hôtel de Ville, nobody knowing or caring to ask who he was; and there, by and by,

the authorities found him. Then it became necessary that he should show himself, and he stood upon the balcony and bowed to the crowd. The same day he gave a dinner, to which many general officers and all the leading gentlemen of the city were invited. While the company sat at table, Colonel Cooke arrived from Paris, bringing with him the astounding intelligence of Napoleon's abdication. Lord Wellington immediately rose, and glass in hand, proposed the health of Louis XVIII. The shout with which the company received the toast, was soon taken up out of doors, and ran from street to street. Yet it was scarcely so loud, and certainly far less cordial than the greeting which attended the next toast, of which General Alava was the proposer—" Lord Wellington, Liberador di Espagna."

Every person in the room sprung to his feet; some stood on chairs, several upon the table, and there followed in quick succession, uttered in Portuguese and in French, " Liberador de Portugal," " Le Liberateur de la France," " Le Liberateur de l'Europe." Probably on no occasion during his long and varied life, was Lord Wellington so much overcome; and no wonder. Men shook each other by the hand, or rushed into each other's arms, shrieking, laughing,—some of them weeping from excitement. So tremendous was the revulsion, from a state of chronic war to a state of peace, so unbounded their admiration of the man, whom they regarded as the chief instrument in bringing it about. As to Lord Wellington, he rose to return thanks, but could not utter a word. He looked round at the company with tears in his eyes, and calling for coffee, sat down again.

A performance at the theatre followed the dinner, the piece selected being *Cœur de Lion*, and after the play there came a ball. It was given by Lord Wellington at the house which had been assigned to him, and went off, as may be imagined, with great spirit. And so, from day to day, feasting and rejoicing took the place of warlike preparations. But this is not all.

Hostilities having ceased, it was not perhaps unnatural that the inhabitants of a conquered country should endeavour to conciliate the victors by treating them well. But in the present instance, the inhabitants of the invaded country had never, except in very isolated cases, treated the invaders otherwise than well. The rear of the British army, and its followers, were just as safe in the south of France as they had ever been in Spain. It more than once occurred that the sick, the wounded, the commissariat stores, and the military chest were left without a

guard in some town removed by three or four leagues from the nearest English division. Yet no attempt was made to rob them, far less to massacre the helpless soldiers and servants, or to carry off the booty. How different this from the condition of the French army in Portugal and Spain! Yet both facts are easily accounted for. The strictest discipline prevailed in one army; the loosest moral in the other. No British officer or soldier ever took from a French civilian an article of any kind without paying for it. No French officer or soldier over thought of paying for anything which a Spaniard or Portuguese civilian might own, of which he stood in need. In the south of France women and children passed to and fro through the English lines unmolested, and were treated by the officers and men, when quartered upon them, with the utmost kindness and respect. How the wretched inhabitants of Spain, and still more of Portugal, fared, when Junot and Massena and Marmont and Soult were their masters, it is not necessary to say. Indeed, so confident was Lord Wellington in the good-will of the people, whom his justice and the excellent conduct of his troops had conciliated, that he caused his hounds to travel in the rear of the army, and had more than one day's hunting in the intervals of battles. They were regularly kennelled in Toulouse, where many a French gentleman saw for the first time—himself vainly striving to keep pace with the field—what English fox-hunting was.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DUKE IN PARIS—AT MADRID—IN ENGLAND—RETURNS TO FRANCE

Of the course of events which preceded, elsewhere, the first abdication of Napoleon, and the return of the princes of the house of Bourbon to France, I am not required to give an account. They have taken their place in the history of Europe, of which they cover one of the most interesting pages. They were scarcely complete, so far as the restoration of Louis XVIII. could complete them, ere Lord Wellington was urgently requested to transfer himself to Paris. The allied sovereigns were there, in delicate and difficult circumstances, and they desired to take counsel with the conqueror of the Peninsula. This invitation reached Lord Wellington through Viscount Castlereagh, who represented the prince regent at the congress; and who in conveying it, announced to his correspondent, that he had been selected by the English Government for the important post of ambassador at the court of the Tuileries. It was not an appointment which Lord Wellington would have sought. He had been long absent from home; and would have rejoiced had be been allowed a little time to superintend the education of his sons, and to arrange his private affairs. Personal considerations, however, weighed with him in the present instance, as little as they usually did, when placed in the scale against public duty. He accepted the charge which the government laid upon him, and made the necessary preparations for entering upon his new duties.

To break up the fine army which he had so long commanded, and bid farewell to troops who had served him so faithfully, was no agreeable task to a man of his temperament. He was proud of both officers and men, and in spite of the sternness which characterised many of his general orders, they were personally attached to him. But he habitually concealed his feelings; and now sent back his Portuguese and Spanish regiments to their respective countries, with as much apparent indifference, as if he had been putting them into winter quarters.

The English were broken up in the same spirit; the infantry and artillery marching to their transports; some to Passages, others to Bordeaux. The cavalry he moved to the Pas de Calais, whence the voyage to England was short. Meanwhile he found himself in a position of something like antagonism with the Duc d'Angoulême. Anticipating the course of events, that prince had ventured to modify by proclamation the existing customs levied in the south of France; and was not without difficulty brought to understand that neither law nor policy justified the proceeding. Lord Wellington's firmness prevailed, and the obnoxious proclamation was withdrawn; though the act of interference with the divine right of kings could never afterwards be atoned for.

After putting these matters in train, Lord Wellington, on the 1st of May, quitted Toulouse. He reached Paris on the 4th, the journey having been remarkable for only one occurrence, of which I have often heard him speak. He had never seen Soult, except through his telescope, first from the hill above Sauroren, and again during the battles near Bedart. Their carriages stopped to change horses at the same post-house, on the night of the 2nd, Soult being then on his way from Paris, Wellington towards it. But Lord Wellington was asleep when the incident occurred, and only heard of it from Lord Fitzroy Somerset at a latter stage in the journey.

Lord Wellington reached Paris on the morning of the 4th of May. He proceeded, immediately after calling upon Lord Castlereagh, to pay his respects to the allied sovereigns, with whom, as well as with the French Government, he entered at once into confidential communication. They were anxious about many matters, but none gave them greater uneasiness than the general condition of Spanish affairs. These seemed to the congress to be in absolute confusion. Now to no living man was Spain and the character of her people more intimately known than to Lord Wellington. He was, therefore, better able than any other to advise concerning them. Yet advice, however sound, offered from a distance, was not likely to carry much weight with it, under existing circumstances. Lord Wellington therefore proposed, and the allies gladly acceded to the proposal, that he should undertake a journey to Madrid; and there, upon the spot, exercise such influence as he possessed, in bringing the king and the contending factions among the people, to understand the true nature of their relative positions. The case was this:

The government of Spain during the late struggle, if government it deserves to be called, first by juntas, and latterly by a cortes and a regency, had never been cordially approved of by Ferdinand. He pledged himself, it is true, to maintain whenever he should be restored to the throne, the privileges of the cortes; but he probably never intended to keep his word; he certainly broke it as soon as he found himself strong enough to do so. The priesthood and the peasantry were generally with him; of the nobles, perhaps, a majority took the same side; but a large portion of the army desired free institutions; as did almost all the trading classes, with the professional and middle orders of society. The king found it necessary, therefore, during his journey to Madrid, to temporise. But he no sooner reached the capital, and saw himself surrounded by crowds of flatterers, than he threw aside all disguise. A violent reactionary policy began. The cortes was dissolved; all its previous acts of liberalism were reversed; the chiefs of the liberal party were imprisoned or driven into exile, and old abuses in church and state were restored. The populace shouted and threw up their caps; the nation was dismayed; and civil war—a curse everywhere, but in Spain a more terrible curse than anywhere else—seemed on the eve of breaking out. Now, if there was one prospect more hideous than another to the chiefs of the confederacy, which had put down the revolutionary spirit in France, it was the reappearance of that spirit elsewhere, whatever form it might assume; and Lord Wellington was charged by every means in his power to stop, if possible, the king and people of Spain from coming to blows.

He had arrived in Paris on the 4th of May, and on the 10th was ready to quit it again. It was a brief interval, yet it brought him two pieces of gratifying intelligence. The prince regent had raised him to the dignity of a dukedom, and parliament had voted, for the maintenance of the title, a sum of half a million, to be laid out in the purchase of a landed estate. He acknowledged, as became him, these munificent recognitions of services past, and departed on his journey to add to their numbers. He succeeded in staying the outbreak of a military revolt, which had been fully matured. The third and fourth Spanish armies, which he saw at Torbes and Mondragon, were on the point of declaring for the cortes; when the appeal of their old commander to their loyalty as soldiers, restrained them. But matters had proceeded too far to leave any hope of permanent good. The duke arrived in Madrid on the 24th

of May, and was in constant and intimate communication with the king and his ministers, up to the 8th of June. The tone of his correspondence, never very sanguine, became more and more desponding as days passed. "Those to whom I have talked," he writes on the 25th of May, "who pretend and ought to know, say that his Majesty will certainly perform the promise made in his decree of the 4th of May, and will give a free constitution to Spain." "I told him" (the Duc de San Carlos), he says on the 1st of June, "that he must expect the king's measures to be attacked and abused in all parts of the world, particularly in England, and that till some steps were taken to prove that the king was inclined to govern the country on liberal principles, and that necessity alone had occasioned the violent measures which had attended the revolution, he could not expect much countenance in England. Nothing, however, has as yet been done, and I hear that nine more persons were imprisoned the night before last." Finally, just before quitting Madrid, after having expressed his views fully on all the questions of home and colonial administration, and on the reorganisation of the army, he writes thus:—"I think there will be no civil war at present." Beyond this his expectations did not go, and even thus far they were by no means either settled or expansive.

The British army, or a considerable portion of it, still lingered at Toulouse; and in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux a large camp was formed. He saw both sections of the force on his way back to Paris, and took leave of them in a general order. It contrasts, in a remarkable degree, with similar essays from the pen of his great rival; but it went home, in its simplicity, to the hearts of British soldiers. This done, he pursued his journey; and after a few days spent in Paris, crossed the Channel, and took the road to London. He had not set foot in England since his embarkation at Portsmouth in 1809. He had quitted the country a man generally looked up to, surrounded by the halo of Indian victories, a lieutenant-general, and a knight of the Bath. He now returned laden with all the honours which a great soldier can acquire; a field marshal in each of the principal armies of Europe, a Portuguese magnate, a Spanish grandee, and an English duke. His reception by his own countrymen was enthusiastic in the extreme. With difficulty he made his way through the crowds which thronged the pier at Dover, and clustered round him up to the door of his hotel; and when, travelling post, he reached Westminster

Bridge, the people took the horses from his carriage, and dragged him through the streets. He was thus conveyed to Hamilton Place, where the duchess then resided—the crowd lifting him in their arms when he desired to alight, and scarcely leaving him after the hall door had been opened. Little business was done in London that day, so mad were the inhabitants with joy at the return of him whom they then regarded as the preserver, not of England only, but of Europe.

The reader will perfectly understand that the duke's stay in England, which did not exceed six weeks, was one continued succession of triumphs. In spite of the presence of the allied sovereigns and their suites, he was the observed of all observers. The University of Oxford conferred upon him its highest academical honour, the degree of Doctor of Laws. The Lord Mayor and all the corporate bodies of London feasted, and elected him to be a member of their several guilds. The Commons of England stood uncovered while the Speaker conveyed to him, in an address of consummate eloquence, their thanks. And the Lords received him into their august body as baron, viscount, earl, marquis, and duke, by accumulation. There is not in history a parallel instance of an English subject on whose head have been showered so many tokens of royal and of national gratitude, all bestowed, so to speak, in one day. To say that the Duke of Wellington did not feel such distinction, would be to charge him with a nature less than human. He was overwhelmed, not with the sense of his own merits, but of the nation's gratitude; and showed by his manner of receiving each fresh mark of respect, as it came,—calm, collected, modest, and, therefore, dignified,—that the least prominent feature in the picture thus presented to his view was himself.

So passed the time till the beginning of August, when the Duke of Wellington set out again for the continent. He was about to represent the British Government at the Court of the Tuileries; but other duties devolved upon him at the same time, and these he discharged as he went. Belgium and Holland, after having been annexed to the French empire, were separated from it again. Instead, however, of restoring the former to Austria, the Congress of Sovereigns determined to erect the two into one kingdom, which might, they persuaded themselves, become, after a while, a barrier on the north to French ambition. But the old frontier fortresses of Belgium had ceased to exist. The few that survived the reforming propensities of the Emperor

Joseph, Napoleon had dismantled; and it was now to be determined whether, and to what extent, they should be restored. The duke carefully surveyed the entire line from Liége, along the Meuse and the Sambre, to Namur and Charleroi, and thence by Mons and Tournay to the sea. He recommended that most of the fortresses which guard it should be put in a state of defence; and he selected, in rear of them, positions where, in the event of another war, armies might assemble. It is worthy of notice that among the positions so marked out was that of Waterloo, on which, within less than a year, the fate of Europe was to be determined. But he did more for the Low Countries than this. A strong party in England, supported by the highest naval authorities, were urgent for the destruction of Antwerp; on the plea that Antwerp, in the hands of the French, must become, with its works entire, a standing menace to London. The duke set himself against the adoption of views at once so illiberal and so short-sighted; and his reasoning prevailed, much to the advantage of the Low Countries, and still more to the honour of his own nation and government.

The duke reached Paris on the 22nd of August, and remained there about five months. It was an interval devoted rather to endless details than to the arrangement of great plans, or the confirmation of great principles. He had the battle of the abolition of the slave trade to fight; and he fought it as gallantly as circumstances would allow. Questions of compensation for private property destroyed during the war came continually before him, and were weighed and discussed with exemplary patience. But his correspondence with the Home Government shows clearly enough that other and graver thoughts were not absent from his mind. He saw, with regret, the growing unpopularity of the Bourbons, and the cause of it. He deprecated their conduct, both to the army and to the people, without, however, attributing either to the French army or the French people virtues which did not belong to them. And already he began to speculate on a probable outbreak. "I believe the truth to be," he says to Lord Bathurst, on the 17th of December, 1814, "that the people of this country are so completely ruined by the revolution, and they are now suffering so severely from the want of the plunder of the world, that they cannot go on without it; and they cannot endure the prospect of a peaceable government. If this is the case, we should take care how we suffer the grand alliance to break up; and we ought to look to our alliance with the powers of the Peninsula as our sheet anchor."

Of the private life of the Duke of Wellington all this while few records remain. He appears to have been joined by the duchess soon after his arrival in Paris, and occupying the Hotel de Borghese in the Rue Fauburg St. Honore, dispensed there a liberal hospitality. By this process many acquaintances were formed, and some friendships which lasted till the close of his life; among the latter of which none deserves to be more specially noticed than his intimacy with the Right Hon. Charles Arbuthnot. That gentleman, who had formerly represented England at the Ottoman Court, and held office, at a later period, as Chief Commissioner of Woods and Forests, visited Paris in 1814, with his young and accomplished wife. It would be difficult to conceive a greater contrast than was presented by the gentle—I might almost say, the effeminate—manner and turn of mind which characterised one of these gentlemen, to the frank, open, and manly temperament of the other. Yet such was the attachment which matured itself between them that, in after years, when both had become widowers, they lived together till Mr. Arbuthnot died, at a very advanced age, in the apartments at Apsley House which the duke had made over to him.

The duke's personal habits while representing his sovereign at the Court of the Tuileries differed little from what they had been when, at the head of a great army, he conducted a great and difficult war. He was still an early riser, still dressed with care and simplicity; was still industrious as a man of business, and lively and affable in general society. His own hounds he had disposed of in England,—they would have been an encumbrance to an ambassador in a foreign country,—but he hunted occasionally with those of the King of France, and seemed to enjoy the sport.

It was different from that to which he had been accustomed, for a deer generally constituted the quarry; the quarry coming to grief when the run grew slack, by a bullet from the gun of a witty keeper, who always assigned the credit of the shot to the Duc d'Angoulême. For the duc assumed the right of giving the *coup de grace*, and the keeper, knowing what a wretched shot his Royal Highness was, fired at the same time, exclaiming as the animal fell, "Monsieur tire à merveille."

On one of these occasions, but only once, out of compliment to French royalty, the duke made his appearance at the corner of the cover arrayed in a gold-laced coat, and jack boots, with a

cocked hat on his head, and a *couteau de chasse* at his side. This was at Rambouillet, but as he could not be persuaded to cumber his horse with a velvet saddle and heavy French trappings, so quaint a figure astride upon a common English hunting-saddle, presented a very comical appearance. Neither the duke himself, nor any Englishman that day present, could keep his gravity. The duke never put on the disguise again.

And here I may mention that the duke's horses were in those days excellent. He paid large prices for them, and treated them well, yet he was liberal to excess in lending them to such of his young men as could not very well afford to mount themselves. He sometimes suffered for this liberality, as the following anecdote will show.

The duke got from England a remarkably fine horse, to which, as it was purchased from a dealer so called, he gave the name of Elmore. He had never ridden the animal, but proposed to do so on a certain occasion, when the royal hounds were to meet at Versailles. A press of business prevented his fulfilling that intention, and it so happened that Lord William Lennox, being the aide-de-camp in waiting, ought to have remained at home with his chief. The duke, however, was aware of the young man's passion for hunting, and as Lord William was one of those whom he was in the habit of mounting, he felt doubly reluctant to interfere with the day's sport. When Lord William appeared at the breakfast table, therefore, booted and spurred, the duke first alarmed him by saying, "No hunting to-day, William, I must write despatches," and then seeing the lad's countenance fall, added with a smile, "But you need not stay, I can do without you; and, by the by, you may as well ride Elmore, only take care of him, because I mean to ride him myself next week."

Delighted to be set free, and especially gratified by the nature of the mount, Lord William set off, and went through the day's sport much admired by the field, and greatly to his own satisfaction. But returning quietly in the evening towards Paris, Elmore stepped upon some rotten ground, and his rider became immediately aware that the horse was injured. Indeed Lord William was obliged to dismount and lead the animal the rest of the way. Terrified as well as grieved, the boy said nothing about the accident, hoping that it might turn out after all to be a trifle, and that a little skilful treatment would in a day or two bring everything right. But it was not so to be. Elmore's

case proved to be a bad one, and at the end of a week, when the duke required him, the secret could no longer be kept. "Well," said the duke after Lord William had stammered out his confession, "that's rather a bore. Accidents will happen to be sure, and this can't be helped, but it won't do to have all my horses lamed; so for the future you must confine yourself to the bay mare and the brown gelding, and if you lame these, then you must mount yourself."

CHAPTER XXVI

CONGRESS OF VIENNA—RETURN OF NAPOLEON TO FRANCE

History has recorded how all this while a congress of sovereigns and their ministers sat in Vienna, to readjust some, and explain others, of the articles which had been agreed to in the Treaty of Paris. Lord Castlereagh, then minister for Foreign Affairs, represented England at that congress, till the meeting of parliament recalled him in January, 1815, to London. The duke was thereupon required to take his place, and found, on arriving in the Austrian capital, that no very good spirit prevailed among the allies. They had held together tolerably well so long as a common danger threatened, but now having achieved a victory, they quarrelled over the division of the spoil. Before angry words led, however, to blows, tidings of the escape of Napoleon from Elba reached them, and the tempers of the most irritable calmed down in a moment. It was from the Duke of Wellington that the allied sovereigns received the first intimation of that event. A *grande chasse* in the park near Schönbrün had been arranged, and on the morning of the 7th of April, princes and statesmen mounted and set out. The duke, when his horse was brought round from the stable, desired it to be taken back again. He had received letters which must be answered immediately, and could not therefore go with the rest. His letters were important indeed. They came from Lord Burghersh, and announced that the great state prisoner was at large, and that he was expected from hour to hour to land at Naples, where Murat was ready to receive him. Napoleon, as is well known, played for a larger stake. He landed at Frijus, and made at once for Paris. Before him all opposition went down, and in less than three weeks he was dictating proclamations from the Tuileries, and the Bourbons were once more exiles in a foreign land.

How the allies bore themselves under the circumstances, what manifestoes they issued, and what preparations they made, it is not my business to show. I have to speak of the duke and of the part that he played in the great operations which

followed, and that, too, rather as one who would suggest general ideas than as the chronicler of particular events. He began by being the great adviser on military subjects of those around him. He drew out for them a plan of campaign, specified the number of troops which could be advantageously brought forward on various points, and explained the order and object of their movements. His own sphere of action was already settled. He was to proceed, with as little delay as possible, to the Low Countries, where the nucleus of a British army kept guard, and there to assume the command of as many troops as England, and the kingdom of the United Netherlands, could bring together.

The duke quitted Vienna on the 29th of March. There were no railroads in those days, and travelling by post, the most expeditious mode then known, appears to us, who have well-nigh forgotten how it was conducted, to have been tedious in the extreme. He entered his carriage with only two young men in attendance, Colonel Fremantle and Lord William Lennox; and scarcely alighted till he reached Frankfort, which was done on the 2nd of April. There a few hours were given to sleep, after which the journey was resumed. Night and day the horses were kept at their best speed, the travellers eating their meals as they passed along, and on the 8th of April Brussels was entered. From that day forth up to the beginning of June the Duke worked as he had often worked before, to remedy blunders for which he was not responsible, and to overtake time which others had allowed to get away from them. He worked, too, under disadvantages as grave as the worst of those to which in earlier years use had reconciled him. The British troops actually in the Netherlands did not exceed 10,000 men. They consisted chiefly of second battalions, the remains of that corps which in 1814 had suffered so severely at Bergen-op-Zoom, and were scattered in garrisons through the frontier fortresses, while the Prince of Orange organised a Dutch-Belgian army in their rear. Now the Dutch-Belgians, however individually brave, were as yet very imperfectly drilled. It was more than suspected likewise that of the Belgians at least some were by no means well-affected. Neither were his prospects at all encouraging when he cast his eyes across the Channel, for almost all his old Peninsular regiments were either in America or still at sea on their way home.

"I cannot help thinking," he wrote on the 6th of April to Lord Bathurst, "that we are not in a condition to maintain our military character in Europe. It appears to me that you

have not taken in England a clear view of your situation, that you do not think war certain, and that a great effort must be made, if it is hoped that it shall be short. You have not called out the militia, or announced such an intention in your message to parliament, by which measure your troops of the line in Ireland and elsewhere might become disposable; and how we are to make out 150,000 men, or even the 60,000 of the defensive part of the Treaty of Chumont, appears not to have been considered. If you could let me have 40,000 good British infantry, besides those you insist upon having in garrisons, the proportion settled by treaty you are to furnish of cavalry, that is to say, the eighth of 150,000 men, including in both the old German legion and 150 pieces of British field artillery, fully horsed, I should be satisfied, and take my chance for the rest, and engage that we should play our part in the game. But as it is, we are in a bad way."

The 40,000 good British infantry never made their appearance, nor were either the 15,000 British cavalry or the 150 pieces of well-horsed British field artillery supplied. But Europe was ransacked for mercenary troops, who were found on their arrival to be for the most part either recruits or mere militia. His force upon paper, all included, was raised to 105,000 men, of whom 12,402, were cavalry with 156 guns. Out of these, however, 26,700 were required to garrison the principal fortresses, leaving only 78,300, inclusive of sick and other non-effectives, for the field. And it will be seen by and by that when the day of battle came these 78,300 had dwindled to less than 70,000. He had, however, on his left a stout Prussian army to co-operate with him. To the 30,000 men with which she first took possession of her Rhenish provinces, Prussia added, on the re-appearance of Napoleon, as many as raised her strength in that quarter to 108,000 men, and the ablest of her generals, the gallant veteran Field-Marshal Prince Blücher, assumed the command. Between him and the duke the best understanding prevailed, and both so posted their troops, that while all the approaches from France to Brussels were guarded, the communications between Belgium and Germany on the one hand, and Brussels and the sea on the other, were kept open.

The state of Brussels itself, while the clouds of war thus gathered round it, was curious enough. It became a place of resort, not only to the families of British officers employed with the army in the Netherlands, but to many English ladies and

gentlemen to whom residence in a continental city was then a novelty, and who brought with them to their temporary home all the habits of London fashionable life. Dinners, soirées, balls, theatrical performances, were events of nightly occurrence, which no one more promoted, or seemed more heartily to enjoy, than the duke. For he was in Flanders, as he had been in Portugal, and Spain, and the South of France, an extraordinary economist of time. No point of business, great or small, ever suffered neglect, yet he seemed always to have leisure for social intercourse, and mixed in it freely.

While the allies were thus mustering their strength, and preparing for a second inroad into France, Napoleon, with an energy unparalleled in the history of the world, called forth the might of France to resist the invasion. He found on his arrival in the Tuileries, 150,000 men under arms; in the course of little more than two months he raised the strength of the army to 400,000. All the avenues of approach to the capital, from the Pyrenees on one side to the passes of the Jura on the other, were observed; and the principal fortresses guarding the roads which led from them, armed and garrisoned chiefly with National Guards. His foundries and manufactories of small arms were kept at work day and night. Not that he omitted to appeal to the sovereigns of Europe in the cause of peace. His letters, especially that addressed to the Prince Regent of England, were masterpieces of eloquence; yet, having no confidence in the result, he never for a moment intermitted his efforts to meet the storm when it should come. The consequence was, that by the end of May he had, as I have just stated, 400,000 men with their standards, whom he calcaluted on being able to increase in October to 700,000. But how protract the contest till October came? Only by striking rapidly at Wellington and Blücher; by defeating them in detail, and over-running the Netherlands. It was a bold game to play, yet not entirely desperate. The Belgians were understood to be dissatified with the annexation of their country to Holland; many of them remembered with regret that they had once been French citizens; not a few, it was understood, were willing to become French citizens again. It appeared, therefore, to him, that were the English and Prussian armies out of the way, the Netherlands might be reannexed to the Empire, and with the resources of these countries added to those of France, he entertained little doubt that he should be able to make head, not unsuccessfully, against an alliance so ill-assorted as he believed that of the other powers to be.

The tenor of the duke's correspondence shows that he was not kept in the dark in regard to Napoleon's determination. So early as the 9th of May, he wrote to the Duc de Berri in these words: "I have reason to believe that the enemy's force, now assembled at Valenciennes and Maubeuge, is much greater than has been represented to your Royal Highness, and I should not be surprised if we were attacked." And on the 7th of June his instructions to the governors of the Belgium fortresses began thus: "As soon as the enemy shall have entered the territories of the Low Countries, the under-named places ought to be put in a state of siege." To say that the general, thus alive to all that passed within the enemy's lines, was taken by surprise, when the enemy made his advance, is to contradict reason and common sense. It was the duke's design, deliberately formed, not to move a man, till the plans of his opponent should develop themselves. He might hesitate, to the last, to accept it as a settled matter, that Napoleon would begin the war by invading Belgium. His letter to the Emperor of Austria, written on the 15th of June, which suggests a policy for the adoption of the allies after they should have entered France, makes no allusion whatever to any probable attack upon himself; and on the 12th of May, he wrote to Sir Henry Wellesley, as if such a measure could scarcely be attempted. But not the less certain is it, that to a blow delivered where it was not expected to fall, he never laid himself open. It would have been foreign to his nature to overlook, or treat lightly, any possible contingency of war. He was the most perfect chess-player, in this respect, that ever handled men.

CHAPTER XXVII

DISPOSITIONS OF THE ALLIED ARMIES—BATTLES OF LIGNY AND QUATRE-BRAS—RETREAT OF THE ENGLISH TO WATERLOO—BATTLE OF WATERLOO—THE DUKE ON THE FIELD

It was now the 15th of June. The Prussian army lay along the left bank of the Sambre. General Ziethen's corps held the right, communicating from Charleroi with the left of the English, while General Bulow at Liége, stood on the extreme left. Between these two points were the corps of Pirch and Thielman, the former at Namur, the latter at Ciney. It was arranged that, in case of attack in this direction, a general movement should be made towards the right; and a position taken up between Gosselies and Fleurus; while the duke, inclining to his left, was to come into communication with Blücher, by the Quatre-Bras road. If, on the other hand, the attack should fall on the English, English and Prussians were to concentrate at Waterloo, the country round which the duke had carefully surveyed. The roads from the French frontier to Brussels, by the valley of the Sambre and the Meuse, having been broken up, the duke arrived at the conclusion that through the approaches by the valleys of the Scheldt and the Dender, the storm when it came would burst. He paid particular attention, therefore, to the defences of Ghent, and kept, to the last moment, a strong corps in observation at Hall, under Prince Ferdinand of the Netherlands.

The 15th passed at Brussels in perfect quiet. Intelligence came in from Charleroi, at seven that morning, that the fires of numerous bivouacs were seen the previous night to blaze up suddenly, and that in the morning the outposts at Lobbès and Thuin had been attacked. But no further tidings followed, and the duke naturally assumed that this was a feint to cover some serious operations elsewhere. Except therefore by issuing orders that all his divisions should be ready to march at a moment's notice, he took no special notice of the circumstance.

There was to be a ball on the night of the 15th, at the lodgings of the Duchess of Richmond; and the Prince of Orange came in

from Braine-le-Comte to dine with the duke, and to be present at it. He arrived about three in the afternoon, and reported, that the Prussians had been warmly engaged in and about Charleroi. It was the first intimation of that important fact which the duke had received, and while he yet hesitated whether to accept it as authentic, General Müffling, the Prussian commissioner at the English head-quarters, entered and confirmed the statement. An orderly dragoon, it appeared, whom General Ziethen had early sent off to announce to the duke the commencement of hostilities, had lost his way; and but for the delivery of despatches from Prince Blücher to General Müffling, it is impossible to guess when the true state of the case might have been made known.

Calm, and even gentle, whenever dangers gathered round him, the duke impressed upon his guests the necessity of keeping what they knew to themselves. He advised them also to go, as they had prevously intended, to the duchess's ball, and himself made ready to accompany them. Before sitting down to dinner, however, he drew up orders, clear, distinct, and explicit, for the march of the three distant divisions of the army to the left. "They moved that evening and in the night, each division, and portion of a division, separately; the whole being protected on the march by the defensive works constructed at the different points referred to, and by their garrisons." [1]

These orders, issued between four and five in the afternoon, directed only the outlying divisions of the two advanced corps, commanded respectively by the Prince of Orange and Lord Hill, to shift their ground. All the rest were instructed to assemble and to be in readiness. At ten the same night, however, the enemy's movements had sufficiently disclosed his intention; and the whole army, with the exception of the reserve, was put in motion. It marched by various roads upon Quatre-Bras. Meanwhile in Brussels itself no signs of agitation or alarm were manifested. The reserve stood to their arms after night-fall in the park, and the salons of the Duchess of Richmond echoed to the sounds of music and dancing. Gayest among the gay, the duke was there, remaining till past midnight, when he quietly withdrew, changed his dress, and mounted his horse. Then might be heard in the streets the tramp of columns, the clatter of horses' hoofs, and the roll of artillery. The reserve was in motion; and one by one the officers, who had shared in the festivities of the night, stole away. They hurried off each to

[1] Memorandum in the duke's handwriting.

his own corps, and were in action a few hours subsequently, many of them in their ball dresses.

There occurred at that ball an incident, trifling in itself, but which, because it indicated the duke's entire perception of what was about to happen, seems to demand notice. After wishing the duchess good-night, he approached the Duke of Richmond, and said in a low voice, "Have you a good map of the country in the house?" An answer was given in the affirmative, whereupon the two gentlemen adjourned to the Duke of Richmond's bed-room, and there the map was produced. The Duke of Wellington examined it and said, "Buonaparte has gained a day's march on me, I have arranged to meet him at Quatre-Bras. If I am not able to stop him there, I will fight him *here*," making at the same time a mark with his thumb-nail at Waterloo. No more passed between them. The Duke of Richmond returned to his guests, and the Duke of Wellington rode off to carry into execution the simple plan thus set forth.

I have told elsewhere, and other historians have told also, how Napoleon concentrated 120,000 men in front of Charleroi, hoping before the allies could cover them to seize the two strategic points of Quatre-Bras and Sombruffe. In this he failed through the loss of a day upon the march, which enabled the Prince of Orange to occupy the former post, while Blücher succeeded in collecting 80,000 men, and placing them so as to secure the latter. The force under the command of the Prince of Orange was, however, very small, scarcely exceeding 6000 men. Had he been attacked with vigour early on the 16th his post must have been carried. But Napoleon's attention was directed mainly towards the Prussians, on whom he fell with great fury, leaving Ney with 17,000 men and 38 guns to dispose of the Prince of Orange. The Prussians, as is well known, sustained a defeat. Routed they were not, for they withdrew after night-fall in good order, but they had decidedly the worst of the battle. Meanwhile the Prince of Orange with difficulty maintained himself till reinforcements arrived. There was a hard day's fighting with varied success, which extended into the night; but by this time the Anglo-Belgian divisions were got well together, and they remained masters of the field, and of some ground in advance of it. All this the general historian will tell more at length; let me speak rather of the Duke of Wellington, and of his sayings and doings while great events were in progress.

Setting out from Brussels at a very early hour on the 16th, he reached Quatre-Bras about noon, and found that the Prince of Orange's corps had already been engaged, though not seriously. The pickets were driven in, and the enemy seemed to be collecting in masses for a more determined onset. Having suggested a few changes in the disposition of the troops, the duke rode over to confer with Blücher. He found the Prussian army ranged along the outer brow of a series of heights, which extended from St. Amand to Sombruffe, and in front of which, in the valley below, ran the Ligny rivulet. The duke was not satisfied with what he saw, and being appealed to, assigned his reasons, though in terms, as was usual with him, calculated to spare rather than to wound the feelings of his colleague. "Are you not very much exposed here? I should have placed my men on the other side of the ridge, and kept them sheltered from the enemy's artillery till they were needed." "My men," replied Blücher, "like to see the enemy with whom they are going to fight." The duke said no more, but while cantering back to Quatre-Bras, observed to those about him, "If Buonaparte be what I suppose he is, the Prussians will get a d—d good licking to-day." The consequence of this impression was a slight change of plan, settled between the chiefs before they parted; and an agreement that they should henceforth communicate by the Namur road, the English standing fast at Quatre-Bras throughout the day.

The Prussians retired, as has been said, without confusion after nightfall. They took the road to Wavre. It was a route which Napoleon never expected them to follow, and hence Grouchy, whom he sent in pursuit, took at first a wrong direction. Meanwhile the English, after successfully resisting every attack, lay down on the ground where they had fought. The duke slept beside his men, though not till by the light of the bivouac fire he had skimmed through a whole bundle of English newspapers which reached him soon after dark. He was in excellent spirits, and chatted freely about the gossip of London. Through his glass he had been able to watch the progress of the battle of Ligny, and had seen the famous cavalry charge in which Blücher was unhorsed. But the turn which things took appeared to create in him not the slightest uneasiness. "Well, Alava," he exclaimed, as his faithful Spanish follower approached, "were you at the Duchess of Richmond's ball last night?" General Alava has left it upon record that this brief address fell upon his ear like music. He too had seen the defeat of the Prussians, and fearing that matters looked black, was a little at a loss how to

approach the duke. But the moment the duke spoke his confidence returned. And here let me notice, that General Alava, having been attached to the duke's head-quarters when the British army broke up from the lines at Torres Vedras, never quitted him afterwards. I have met him often at Walmer Castle, and believed, from his manner, that he was prepared to follow the duke's fortunes to the end of his days. But he was then in exile as a constitutionalist. By and by, when the revolution occurred, which set aside the Salic law in Spain, General Alava attached himself to the party of the queen, and running into ultra-liberalism, broke with the duke at the period of our own Reform Bill, not, as the duke's friends alleged, in the most becoming manner. The duke used to say of him "that he was the only man living who had taken part in the greatest naval as well as the greatest military action of modern times;" for Alava served in the *Sanctissima Trinidada* at Trafalgar against the English, and rode beside the duke at the battle of Waterloo against the French.

Alava's confidence was not misplaced, for the duke had made arrangements in his own mind to meet every possible contingency. He received throughout the night more than one report of what the Prussians were doing; and at early dawn on the 17th sent a cavalry patrol to reconnoitre. After a brief absence, the patrol returned with tidings that not a Prussian was anywhere to be seen. But the duke distrusted the correctness of the statement, and calling to him Colonel Gordon, his aide-de-camp, desired him to take a strong escort, and not to come back till he had found out something. Colonel Gordon executed his commission well, and finding General Ziethen still upon the ground (for Ziethen's corps formed the rear-guard of the Prussian army), learned from him exactly by what route Blücher was retiring. "Tell the Duke of Wellington," said Ziethen, "that if he will hold to our agreement, and accept a battle at Mont St. Jean, he shall not long be left to fight alone."

Instructed on these points, the duke remained at Quatre-Bras till three o'clock in the afternoon, giving Blücher thereby ample time to perfect his arrangements. Why he was not assailed early in the day by the whole French army has never been explained. At last, however, the enemy began to advance in force, whereupon the duke drew off; and with consummate skill and in perfect order marched upon the position of Waterloo. His cavalry, which covered this movement, was more than once engaged with the enemy, particularly on the further side of

Genappes, where the French suffered severely; but except thus, and by occasional discharges of artillery, no attempt was made to hurry or impede his retreat. Under a furious storm of rain and thunder the British troops took up their ground, and slept throughout the night between the 17th and 18th of June where on the morrow not a few of them were destined to sleep the sleep that knows no waking. The duke established his head-quarters in the village of Waterloo. He ate a hearty dinner, or rather supper, and went early to bed. At two in the morning of the 18th he was up, and after shaving and dressing with his usual care, sat down to his desk, with a couple of candles burning beside him. He wrote cheerfully to Sir Charles Stuart, then minister at Brussels: "Pray keep the English quiet if you can. Let them all prepare to retire, but neither be in a hurry or a fright, as all will yet turn out well." He communicated his wishes to the Duc de Berri at Ghent, concluding his letter in these remarkable words: "I hope, and indeed have every reason to believe, that all will turn out well." And he gave orders to the Governor of Antwerp to consider that fortress in a state of siege; but at the same time to give free admission, not alone to the royal family of France, but to the families of Englishmen, or of men of any other nation who might consider it judicious to flee from Brussels. This done, he breakfasted, mounted his horse, and rode out to see that his troops were in their proper places. It did not appear from his manner at the moment—his subsequent conversation never showed—that he entertained graver apprehensions of the issues of the coming battle than of any other in which he had been previously engaged. Yet the spectacle on which his eye fell, when he gained the crest of his own position, was, to say the least, an imposing one.

Spread over a range of heights, facing his own, with the château of Belle Alliance conspicuous in the midst, lay 71,947 French troops, all men of one nation, all accustomed to war, and all imbued with the fullest confidence in the skill and fortune of their commander. Of these, 15,765 were superb cavalry, and 246 guns supported them. As yet, however, they presented the appearance of an army still in bivouac. And hour after hour stole on, greatly to the duke's surprise, without producing any visible index of change. But about ten o'clock the drums and trumpets spoke out; and promptly, but with perfect deliberation, columns of attack were formed. There was no mistaking the object of this formation. Clouds of skirmishers soon ran out, and the battle began.

I am not going to tell here what I have told already over and over again, how the battle of Waterloo was fought. It was a stern meeting between 71,947 brave men on one side, all homogeneous and confident in their leader, and 67,655 on the other; the latter a motley host made up of Belgians, Dutchmen, Brunswickers, Hanoverians, the troops of Nassau, and though last, not least, of 22,000 British soldiers. The brunt of the action fell, as was to be expected, on the English and the gallant German legion. The English held Hougomont throughout the day; the Germans lost the farm-house of La Haye, though not till after a desperate resistance and the expenditure of all their ammunition. In the line, which extended from Hougomont to Braine-l'Alleud, the various nations were much intermixed; but while the English, the Germans, and the Dutch kept their ground, the others for the most part gave way, and were not without difficulty rallied in a second line, which never came under fire. The battle was a defensive one on the side of the Anglo-Belgians all day long. The duke fought to keep Napoleon at bay, till Blücher should be able to join in the *melée*. Napoleon strove to break through and disperse the English, before time was given for the Prussians to come up. He threw his columns, now of infantry, now of cavalry, now of cavalry and infantry combined, on the right, on the centre, and partially on the left of the English position. He poured upon the position and the troops which held it, the sustained fire of 246 guns, to which from the side of the allies 156 guns replied. But he gained no advantage. Twice his horsemen crowned the ridge and rode about infantry squares which they never succeeded in breaking, and twice the charge of the English cavalry drove them back. The slaughter on both sides was terrific, but the final issues of the battle seem never to have been doubtful.

The personal bearing of the duke was throughout the day the admiration of all who witnessed it. He came upon the ground about seven in the morning, and never once dismounted from his horse till after dark. He was on no single occasion, as it seemed, in a hurry, yet always prompt to apply a remedy to whatever mistake or failure occurred. In arranging his troops for the struggle he put into the park and enclosures about Hougomont the same Nassau battalions which had come over from the French in December, 1814. The château itself was filled with guardsmen. "I placed the Nassau battalions there," he used to say in after years, "because having often encountered us before, and knowing what we were worth, I took it for

granted that they would behave as well beside us as they used to do when opposed to us. I soon found out my mistake. Like the rest of the continental troops, they had learned to believe Napoleon irresistible, and no sooner saw the enemy bearing down upon them than they began to waver. It was this which induced me at the last moment to withdraw them, and to supply their place with a battalion of the guards."

It has often been stated—and Captain Grunow in his amusing volume repeats the statement—that in the course of the battle the duke took shelter from the enemy's cavalry within one or more of the English squares. The duke always denied that he had been driven to this extremity. He moved about as occasion required from point to point, but his principal station was near a tree on the brow of the hill which overhangs Hougomont and La Haye, and whence a clear view of the whole field of battle could be obtained. The tree was riddled with shot, and once the fire directed towards it came so heavily, that several officers remonstrated with him for continuing to expose himself as he did. On that occasion he moved a little on one side, and the fire grew slack. Whether Napoleon had seen him, and directed this heavy fire to be turned upon him, I do not know. The contingency is by no means impossible, for such appears to have been his usual practice. Indeed it was thus that at the battle of Dresden, when the Emperor of Russia, surrounded by a numerous staff, attracted his attention, he became the direct means of killing Moreau. He was standing beside a couple of guns when the group attracted his attention, and himself desired the officer in charge to "throw a shot or two into the covey." The first shot took no effect, but Moreau, riding up to speak to the emperor just as the second gun was pointed, and the emperor reining back at the same time, the ball struck Moreau's horse, killing the animal, and carrying off both legs of the rider. Napoleon rejoiced at the occurrence. The duke's view of matters was very different. "There's Buonaparte, sir," exclaimed an artillery officer whose guns the duke had approached, "I think I can reach him, may I fire?" "No, no," replied the duke, "Generals commanding armies have something else to do than to shoot at one another."

The casualties among the duke's personal staff on the day of Waterloo proved very great. One after another they were borne from the field either killed or desperately wounded, till he was left without a single staff-officer to carry a message.

There chanced, however, to be near him a brave young Swiss

gentleman—a Count de Salis—who had chosen to follow the duke that day to the field. The duke turned to him, and apologising for the act, requested him to be the bearer of an order to Sir James Kempt. The order was carried through a storm of fire, and punctually obeyed. Another story of the same sort I have heard, but only since the duke's death. I cannot therefore vouch for its authenticity, but it comes within the range of more than probability, and I may as well relate it.

The duke was quite alone, and a portion of his cavalry, too eager in pursuit, was in imminent danger. He looked round for an aide-de-camp whom he might send with orders to bring up some support, but the only mounted person near was a gentleman in plain clothes. "Would you be afraid to ride to the front?" asked the duke, calmly. "You see that group of horsemen there," pointing towards a brigade of cavalry which was halted. "I want them to move on. Would you object to carry my message?" "No, your grace," was the answer, "provided you will make a written note of what you want, because I might mistake, not being of your grace's trade." "True, true," answered the duke, with a smile, and then taking a piece of paper out of his pocket, he wrote upon it with a pencil, and gave it to the civilian. The civilian galloped off. The duke saw him pass through a line of heavy fire and reach the cavalry brigade, which moved as he had wished it to do; but he saw his messenger no more. The natural conclusion was that the poor fellow had been killed, and probably the duke never thought of him again. But several years afterwards, having occasion to enter a shop in the city, he saw behind the counter a face which appeared to be familiar to him. After looking for a while at the individual, he said, "Surely I have seen you before. You are not the man who carried a message for me at Waterloo, are you?" "I am, indeed, your grace." "And why the devil didn't you come back, that I might have thanked you, and given you in my despatches the praise that you deserved?" "To tell your grace the truth, I had had enough of it. I felt that I had no business there, and did not quite know where to find you again. Nor was I at all anxious to ride a second time through that shower of bullets. So having escaped unhurt, I turned my horse's head towards Brussels, and got back to England as fast as I could."

If all this really passed, the duke must have been both interested and amused by it, but as I never heard him advert

to the circumstance, I give the anecdote on no better authority than that which gave it to me.

Among others whom he encountered on the field were the Duke of Richmond, and his son, Lord William Lennox. The latter, poor fellow, had met with an accident before the campaign opened, and was rendered therefore incapable of discharging his duties as aide-de-camp. The former, an old and gallant soldier, could not be within hearing of a cannonade, yet resist the temptation of getting into it. Upon both the Duke of Wellington, when he met them, looked grave. "William, you ought to be in bed. Duke, you have no business here." The Duke of Richmond and his sick son acknowledged the justice of the reproof, and returned to Brussels.

The duke had received during the night of the 17th several communications from Blücher. He expected the arrival of the Prussians, therefore, some hours before they made their appearance, and not unnaturally turned his glass more than once in the direction whence they were to come. Except, however, some cavalry which showed itself at daybreak on the 18th upon the ground in front of Ohain and therefore past the defile which separated the two armies, none appeared till late in the day. Still the duke's confidence never forsook him. The French had delivered their last and fiercest attack. It was met and thrown back in all quarters, and the confusion which prevailed in the ranks of the beaten army showed that the day was lost to them. Whether the duke, if no Prussians had been near, would have assumed the offensive just then is uncertain. But at the critical moment Bulow's corps entered into the battle, and a heavy firing in the direction of Planchenois indicated how the battle was going. Then the word was passed along the brow of the English heights to close the ranks of regiments and advance. Then down the slope swept infantry and cavalry, while from the high ground behind the artillery continued to fire, and the last touch was given, by British and Prussian troops meeting upon the field, to the most complete and decisive victory which the world ever saw.

I cannot better close this chapter than by transcribing from the duke's memoranda, which the reader will find at length in the larger edition of this work, the following sentences.

"The allied armies communicated with each other throughout the night of the 17th of June, and the cavalry of General Bulow's Prussian corps of Marshal Prince Blücher's army was on the ground in front of Ohain, through the defile between the

positions of the two armies, at daybreak on the morning of the 18th. Thus, then, it appears that after the affairs at Ligny and Quatre-Bras the two allied armies were collected, each on its own ground, in the presence of the enemy, having a short and not difficult communication between them; each of them in presence of the enemy, and between the enemy and Brussels; all their communications with England, Holland, and Germany, and all the important political interests committed to their charge, being secure."

"The first thing heard of the operations of Marshal Blücher's army was a report, brought from the left of the army under the Duke of Wellington, at about six o'clock in the evening, that at that moment the smoke of the fire of artillery could be perceived at a great distance beyond the right of the enemy's army, which firing was supposed at that time to be at Planchenois.

"The report of the battle, made at the time by the Duke of Wellington to the British and Allied Governments of Europe, has long been before the public. In that report he does full justice to the exertions made by his colleague, the Prussian commander-in-chief, and by the general officers and troops, to aid and support him, and to the effectual aid which they gave him. He states no details, excepting that the battle was terminated by an attack which he determined to make upon the enemy's position, in which he does not report that any Prussian troops joined, because, in point of fact, none were in that part of the field of battle. He states, however, that the enemy's troops retired from the last attack upon his position in great confusion, and that the march of General Bulow's corps by Frishermont upon Planchenois and La Belle Alliance, had begun to take effect; and as he could perceive the fire of his cannon, and as Marshal Prince Blücher, with a corps of his army, had touched the left of our line by Ohain, he determined upon the attack, which succeeded in every point."

CHAPTER XXVIII

FALL OF PARIS—ARMY OF OCCUPATION—ATTEMPTS ON THE DUKE'S LIFE

It was late in the evening when the grand advance of the English line took place. Darkness was settling fast over the field of battle, and still the firing continued. The French, broken and dispersed, either threw away their arms and fled, or fought for dear life in groups against pursuers, some of whom gave no quarter. Conspicuous in front of his own line rode the duke, and when the enemy broke at last and fled, he mixed, as night closed in, with the skirmishers, and could not be restrained. "You have no business here, sir," said one of his followers. "We are getting into enclosed ground, and your life is too valuable to be thrown away." "Never mind," replied the duke, "let them fire away. The battle's won; my life is of no consequence now." Thus indifferent to the thousand risks which surrounded him, he pushed on, and drew bridle only when he and Blücher met at the Maison du Roi. Here it was arranged that the Prussians, who had fallen in upon the same road with the English, should continue the pursuit. For though the duke made arrangements to support them with part of his troops, these proved to be so completely exhausted by the fatigues of battle, that they could not go on. A halt was therefore ordered midway between Rossomme and Genappes.

From that point the duke rode slowly home, in clear moonlight, and alone. Scarcely one of his old companions through the war of the Peninsula remained to cheer him with his congratulations. Colonel De Lancy, his quarter-master-general, had received a mortal wound; Major-General Barnes, his adjutant-general, was wounded also; Lieutenant-Colonel Fitzroy Somerset, his faithful and attached military secretary, had lost an arm, and been carried to Brussels. Of his aides-de-camp, two, Colonel the Honourable Alexander Gordon and Lieutenant-Colonel Canning, were both struck down. The latter died on the spot; the former only survived to learn from

the chief whom he had long served and dearly loved that the battle was won. Indeed the losses that day to England, and to the best blood of England, were terrible. Lord Uxbridge, struck by one of the last shots fired, suffered the amputation of a limb. Picton, the hero of a hundred fights, went whither his glory could not follow him. But it would be vain to attempt to particularise, one by one, the brave who purchased with their blood that day a renown which can never perish. The authentic lists of killed and wounded showed a grand total, on the side of the allies, of 23,185. Out of this enormous multitude the English alone lost 11,678; the Netherlanders, 3178; the Brunswickers, 687; the troops of Nassau, 643; the Prussians, 6999. The loss of the French is not quite so easily determined. According to Colonel Charras it amounted to 31,000 or 32,000. Napoleon reckons it at 23,600 only; of these 7000 were prisoners. If we include the casualties which befell in the pursuit, it was probably 40,000 at the least.

The duke reached his head-quarters at Waterloo about ten o'clock at night. He had ridden the same horse all day, yet such was the spirit of the animal, that on his master dismounting, he kicked out in play, and well-nigh struck the duke. The duke entered, and found his dinner prepared with as much regularity as if the cook had expected him home from a review. He ate little, and ate in silence: indeed grief for the fallen, and anxious thoughts about their relatives, quite broke him down. "I cannot express to you," he wrote to Lord Aberdeen, "the regret and sorrow with which I look round me, and contemplate the loss which I have sustained, particularly in your brother. The glory resulting from such actions, so dearly bought, is no consolation to me; and I cannot suggest it as any to you and to his friends." In the same spirit he expressed himself when communicating with the Duke of Beaufort. "You are aware how useful your brother has always been to me, and how much I shall feel the want of his assistance, and what a regard and affection I feel for him, and you will readily believe how much concerned I am for his misfortune. Indeed, the losses I have sustained have quite broke me down, and I have no feeling for the advantages I have acquired."

The duke retired to bed, worn out with fatigue and excitement. He slept till an hour which was late for him, that is to say, at seven next morning Dr. Hume arrived to make his report, and found that his chief was not yet stirring. Having waited till eight, Dr. Hume took it upon him to knock at the

bedroom door, and being desired to enter he did so. The duke sat up in his bed. He was undressed, but had neither washed nor shaved over-night. His face was therefore black with the dust and powder of the great battle, and in that plight he desired the chief of his medical staff to make his report. Dr. Hume read on; but becoming himself deeply affected, he stopped as if to draw breath, and looked up. The tears were running from the duke's eyes, making furrows and channels for themselves through the grime upon his cheek. "Go on," he said, "go on, for God's sake, go on. Let me hear it all. This is terrible." Dr. Hume finished his paper, and withdrew, leaving his great chief in an agony of distress.

In less than an hour the great duke was in his business room giving directions about the future movements of the army, as if nothing extraordinary had happened; and long before noon he was on his way, at a sharp pace, towards Brussels.

I pass by all that immediately followed, as described with sufficient minuteness in the larger edition of this biography. The proclamation that was issued ere the march to Paris began —the march itself—with all its attendant circumstances—the fall of the fortresses, one by one, with or without some show of resistance, and the surrender of the French capital upon capitulation,—these things are recorded where all who are curious in such details can easily find them. So also is the narrative of Napoleon's attempted escape and of his reception on board the British ship of war *Bellerophon*. So also the tale of Blücher's stern dealings with the Parisians; and of the skill and tact with which the duke softened him into a policy of forbearance. I may observe, however, in passing, that while these things went on, and for some time afterwards, when the allied sovereigns and their suites swarmed in Paris, it was to the duke that the Parisians looked as their great protector, whose praise could not be sufficiently in their mouths. But a change came by degrees over the spirit of their dream. The allies began to demand back for their respective countries the spoil which in the composition of 1814 they had unwisely permitted to remain with the spoiler. The duke was appealed to by the French Government to protect the Louvre, and to hinder works of art from being removed; and on his refusal to commit such a gross act of injustice, popular feeling turned against him. The truth is, that all the flattery heaped upon him when he saved the Bridge of Jena and the Austerlitz Column from destruction was mere lip-service. The marshals hated him; so did the king,

and in a very intensified degree so did the other members of the royal family. They could not forgive or forget the fact that in humbling France he had acted like an honest man. And thus it came to pass that as soon as he ceased to be their tool they turned upon him. He was pronounced far more to blame for the plunder of Paris than anybody else. After signing the capitulation he now openly and ostentatiously broke through its conditions. He consented to the plunder of the galleries and museums, which he had undertaken to protect. No good Frenchman could hereafter remain on terms of common acquaintance with such a man; no good Frenchman did. One day, to his great surprise, he received a note from the Duc Duras, declining in a very curt manner to dine with him. The duke was surprised, inquired into, and ascertained the true state of the case, and returned the following answer:—

"M. LE DUC,—I have had the honour to receive your letter, without date, in which you return to me a note which you consider to be an invitation to dinner 'in a somewhat royal style.' In reply, I beg of you to believe that the note was not intended for you, and I offer you a thouand excuses for its having been mis-sent. It does not contain an invitation to dinner in a royal or any other style, but merely a promise to dine with some one on the 28th. That some one is the Duc d'Otrante; and I very much regret that my secretary should have mistaken your name for that of the individual who wrote to me, proposing that I should dine with him. Such is the true history of this invitation to dinner 'in a somewhat royal style.' I send you herewith the note of invitation which you desire to have."

The conduct of the Duc Duras was silly. It was the act of a pettish man, prompt to take offence where no offence could be intended; but it had its political meaning too. Another outrage might have led to graver consequences, but that the duke treated it with contempt. He was in the frequent habit of attending the king's levées; and on such occasions usually found himself beset with civilities. About this time he went as usual, and observed that one marshal after another held aloof from him. At last, as if a common feeling actuated them, they all turned about and walked away. The king saw, and though not himself free from the contagion, affected to consider this a strong measure, for he approached the duke, and began to make some excuses for it. "Don't distress yourself, sire," observed the duke quietly, "it is not the first time they have turned their backs

on me." It was a sharp stroke of wit, which, when repeated, obtained great favour even with the French. The marshals, among others, felt its force. There might be little increase of cordiality among them; but they took good care never again to turn their backs upon the duke when they saw him approaching.

Neither the French court nor the French people ever cordially forgave the part which the duke felt himself forced to play in these transactions, and there occurred, not long afterwards, events which increased four-fold the feeling of personal hostility towards him among the people and with the French army.

Soon after the arrival of the king, and the settlement of a constitutional government, a proclamation of amnesty to all who had taken part in the late rebellion was issued. From that amnesty certain individuals were excepted by name; and among the rest, Colonel Labedoyère and Marshal Ney. The first, it will be remembered, had set the example of defection, by going over with his regiment to Napoleon. The last, after undertaking to bring back the invader in a cage, had joined him with the corps of which he was at the head. Both of these gentlemen were in Paris when the capitulation was signed; and both, had they remained in it, would have had a right, so far as the English and Prussian generals were concerned, to claim under it exemption from arrest. Both, however, apparently convinced that from the Bourbons they had no mercy to expect, fled from Paris before the allied troops entered. They were both provided with money by Fouché, at that moment the head of the Provisional Government, and might have escaped, had they chosen, into Switzerland, and been safe.

They were believed to be safe beyond the frontier, when, on the 24th of July, the decree was published which specially excluded them from the amnesty. It was counter-signed by Fouché, the very person who, on the 6th, had sent them away with money in their pockets. The deed was never intended to signify more than the king's determination to draw a line between the crowd and the leaders in the late defection. But Labedoyère committed the folly of appearing in Paris, after he had been proscribed; and being recognised, was, of course, imprisoned, tried, and executed. Ney was scarcely more wise, and equally unfortunate. After arriving within a stage of the Swiss frontier, he turned back, and took up his residence at his own house in the country. He had been there some months, no one in Paris caring to inquire about him, when an over-

zealous local magistrate arrested him, and made a report of what he had done. The French Government was annoyed, but could act only in one way. He was sent to Paris; and after considerable delay, put upon his trial, found guilty, and condemned to be shot. It is a remarkable fact that neither at the time of his outlawry, nor after his arrest in the country, was any appeal made by him, or by the members of his family, to the Duke of Wellington, or to the treaty of capitulation which he had signed. As soon, however, as the trial came on, the duke was importuned to interfere; and as far as it was possible for him, in his private capacity, and circumstanced as he then was in his relations with the French Government, he did interfere. But when the friends of Ney went further, and demanded that the twelfth article of the treaty of capitulation should be applied to his case, the duke refused to admit the justice of the claim. He pointed out that the capitulation was a military convention, and nothing more, entered into between the commanders of two hostile armies; that it neither was, nor could be, binding on the allied sovereigns, and still less upon the King of France. Besides, Marshal Ney, by fleeing from Paris before the allies entered, had excluded himself from the privileges, whatever these may be, which the article in question conferred. But this was not all. Sir Charles, afterwards Lord Stuart de Rothsay, now represented England at the court of France. If the English Government had felt itself at liberty to interfere, such interference would have taken place through him. The duke was the commander-in-chief of the English army, not the English ambassador. Besides, the position in which he stood towards the French Government and the French people in consequence of his straightforward proceedings in the matter of the museums, rendered it impossible for him to ask as a personal favour what he could not demand as a right. For one or other of two results must have followed. Either the government would have refused to spare Ney, in which case the unpopularity of the execution must have been deepened; or else sparing Ney they would have been charged with yielding to an enemy what they refused to the French people. The results are well known. Ney died as he had lived, a brave man; and of the duke it was said that he had permitted the execution because he was envious of the military reputation of one whom he had often defeated in the field.

It is well known that among the continental sovereigns

a general wish at that time prevailed to dismember France. It is equally well known that to the Duke of Wellington alone, and to his influence with the English Government, it was owing that so iniquitous and unwise a policy was abandoned. On the other hand, both the duke and the British Government acknowledged the justice of making France pay, at least in part, the expenses of the war. A certain amount, to be disbursed in annual subsidies, was fixed upon, and it was settled that till this debt should be liquidated, and some certainty of quiet under the existing regime established, an army of occupation should continue to hold the country. The strength of the army was fixed at 150,000 men, of whom England was to furnish 50,000, the rest of Europe 100,000, and the command of the whole was by universal consent conferred upon the Duke of Wellington.

The duke so disposed his force that Paris was left to the king, and France to her own people. The army of occupation held all the principal frontier fortresses, with easy communication between its several divisions. He himself took possession of the Château of St. Martin, about sixteen miles from Cambray, because the country was favourable for field sports, which were forthwith resumed. He had a house, likewise, in Paris, where he spent a good deal of his time in the elucidation and settlement of accounts, and in rendering, when applied to, clear and valuable advice on all the political questions which came up. With respect to the accounts it may suffice to observe that they related to the claims and counter-claims which the French and the allied governments brought against each other. Special commissioners had been named to examine these claims. They worked according to rule, and drew their salaries; but the settlement appeared as remote as ever, when the duke was requested to take the matter in hand. In three months all was made clear. The French ministers themselves were forced to admit that his decisions were just; and they threw themselves on the consideration of the conquerors, which, at his suggestion, was extended to them. Strange to say, all this only tended to aggravate his unpopularity. He was hated on account of his integrity. He was disliked because he could afford to be generous. He was the only man in Europe who could neither be cajoled nor frightened. The great benefactor to France, when she stood most in need of a benefactor, he received as his reward the unmitigated hostility of all classes. The king alone understood his value to the cause of order, and respected, if he did not personally love, the man. But almost every other

Frenchman, except perhaps Talleyrand, probably for this reason, hated him with all his heart.

But the duke was hated elsewhere than in France. There were scattered all through Europe at this time, knots of republicans, whom recent events had driven into exile; and who made common cause with the discontented, wherever they settled themselves, and got up or encouraged the growth of secret societies. Belgium became the head-quarters of this revolutionary body; for Belgium was one of the capitals of a constitutional state which guarded, with almost excessive tenderness, the liberties of individuals, and laid itself open, in consequence, to the hostility of its more despotic neighbours. The grand idea which seemed ever present to the minds of the leaders of this party was, how to get the army of occupation removed from France. They persuaded themselves that if this were done, a new revolution might soon be brought about; and the conduct of the French court, if not of the king, gave considerable show of plausibility to the argument. For the court had gradually weeded out of the ministry whatever liberal statesmen had originally belonged to it. Fouché was sent into honourable banishment, Talleyrand was disgraced; the Duke de Richelieu, an ultra-royalist, guided the helm of state, under severe pressure from the king's brothers and the ladies of the family. Numerous proscriptions of suspected persons followed; and it was generally understood that an attempt would be made to recover the estates which the first revolution had confiscated. The republicans believed, or professed to believe, that the Duke of Wellington was favourable to this policy. They established newspapers, in which they openly charged him with conspiring against the liberties of France; and spoke of him as a public enemy whom it would be lawful to destroy, as men destroy wolves. Yet all this while he was incurring the bitter hostility of the royalists, in consequence of the remonstrances which he made to the king against the reactionary policy of his ministers.

Extremes meet in politics as in religion. Royalists and republicans equally abhorred the man who opposed himself with the same honesty of purpose to the devices of both; and both endeavoured to get rid of him by the same means. The duke gave a ball at his hotel in the Rue Champs-Elysées, on the 25th of June, 1816. It was just after he had been with the king, and warned him of the mischief which his brothers and their friends were doing. Angry as they were, the princes

could not refuse to be present at the ball. But they retired early, leaving the rooms still crowded with guests, when an alarm was given that the house was on fire. It appeared, upon inquiry, that in a cellar, of which the window opened to the street, a barrel of oil had been placed; shavings also had been scattered on the floor, in which some bottles filled with gunpowder were mixed, and the shavings were on fire when the discovery was made. A few minutes later, and the whole house must have been in a blaze.

The duke paid very little attention to the occurrence. If he did not himself believe, others certainly did, that the oil, and gunpowder, and shavings, had been placed where they were found, for his destruction; and suspicion, not unnaturally, fell upon the heads of the party with which he was then at enmity. Of the source in which the second attempt on his life originated there could be no doubt. The republicans, or Bonapartists (for they were now united), gradually wrought themselves up to a state of rabid excitement. They received great encouragement from the Emperor Alexander of Russia, who, raised to the throne under appalling circumstances and married to an amiable princess, with whose tastes his own could never agree, fell, as years grew upon him, into a morbid state. He sought relief from his own despondency in devising schemes for the moral regeneration of mankind. It was in one of these fits of philanthropy that his project of the Holy Alliance originated, which, though long misunderstood, is now known to have been as harmless as it was impracticable. It aimed at connecting the princes of Europe in a chain of brotherhood; binding them to govern their respective countries upon Christian principles, and inviting them to acknowledge, as their common head, Jesus Christ. His, too, was the idea, that the affairs of the world might be managed by meetings, at fixed periods, of kings and their ministers, while to the peoples as much of liberty was given as should be compatible with the maintenance of order and the due authority of patriarchal government. The policy of the ultra-royalists in France was peculiarly distasteful to a prince so disposed; and he took every opportunity of condemning and endeavouring to counteract it. Hence, though the most absolute sovereign in Europe, he became the centre towards which all the discontented spirits of all nations gravitated; and listening to their complaints, and expressing sympathy with them, he created the persuasion, that from him, at least, no opposition to the restoration of a golden age would be offered

The Prince of Orange was married to the czar's daughter. He was not on good terms with his own father, and felt sore at the treatment which he had received from England in the matter of the Princess Charlotte of Wales. Partly, perhaps, for these reasons, partly because he entertained profound respect for the emperor, the prince took the same line in politics; and protected, if he did not associate with, the chiefs of the republican refugees in Belgium. Now, the Duke of Wellington, while he averted from the Low Countries the threatened violence of Prussia, was urgent upon the government to rid the country of these fomenters of mischief. He became, in consequence, a special object of their detestation; and writing in their newspapers against him, they wrote at the same time what gave pleasure to men of all shades of opinion in France.

The duke paid a short visit to England in 1816. On his return to the continent he found that an angry spirit was fermenting between the French people and his troops. Insults were offered, and assassinations attempted, against both officers and men; and it was necessary to interfere with a strong hand to stop the evil. This he did, increasing thereby the bitterness of the grudge which was borne him. But the climax of his unpopularity was reached when it came out that an application made by the French Government and supported by Russia, to reduce the army of occupation by 30,000 men, had, through his influence, been rejected. The circumstance befell at a time when, the crops having failed, the pressure of a foreign army could not but be severely felt by the people; and on the plea of relieving the people the proposition was brought forward. But the duke's superior sagacity showed him that unless the allies were prepared to relieve France entirely from the obligations which they had imposed upon her, it was exactly at such a time that good policy required their hold upon the country to be firm. The army, it was demonstrated, had not been too strong to effect that purpose. Weaken it by 30,000 men, and bread-riots, which were pretty sure to occur, might grow into insurrection. But insurrection, if it once gained head, would end in war; and war, besides involving Europe in difficulties and expense, must lead to a third conquest of France, with all the evils attendant on it. The duke's reasoning prevailed. No troops were withdrawn at that time, and the French Government loudly complained, while the republican press pronounced him to be the enemy of the human race.

The duke, though he resisted the measure in question when

first proposed, withdrew his opposition some months later. There was no famine in the land, and the people were, or seemed to be, as little discontented as usual. Accordingly, in April, 1817, 30,000 allied troops quitted France, which experienced, in consequence, a considerable diminution of the burthens to which the Treaty of 1815 had subjected her. But the duke's popularity was not thereby restored. On the contrary, events occurred, almost immediately afterwards, which brought down upon him, most unfairly, a very storm of public odium. Russia had, at this time, a policy of her own. She was exceedingly anxious to conciliate France; and her representative in Paris intrigued with the French Government for getting rid of the army of occupation altogether. It seems difficult to believe that either he or his master could entertain any serious expectation of effecting that object. The Treaty of Paris had fixed the limits of the occupation at five years, of which two were not yet expired, and of the conditions to be fulfilled by France many were still in abeyance. But Russia gained something—or her representative persuaded himself that she did—when the rumour got abroad that such a proposition had, by him, been brought forward, though he had not succeeded in obtaining for it the approval of his colleagues.

Whatever went wrong at home or abroad, the republicans laid to the door of the duke and of the Bourbons. The failure of the Russian scheme supplied them with an admirable topic; and they made their own use of it. In August, 1817, a placard was posted on the walls of Dunkirk which called upon the people to rise and free themselves at once from the Bourbons and their foreign supporters. Of this placard a copy was sent to the duke, who transmitted it to Sir Charles Stuart; but he wrote at the same time, and advised that no public notice should be taken of it. "I don't purpose," he added, "to make any personal communication of this paper to the principal officers of the army of occupation, as it appears very unnecessary to create what I think a groundless alarm. We are all sufficiently on our guard —not against assassination, certainly, and I don't see how we could be so—but against surprise. A few straggling officers or soldiers might be murdered in their cantonments in the winter, certainly; but nothing could prevent our collecting, if necessary; and then, I confess, I don't see what could injure us."

The duke divided his time a good deal between Valenciennes, where the head-quarters of the allied army was stationed, and

Paris, to which he made frequent visits, in order to advise and assist at the deliberations of the council of ministers. In these deliberations all the affairs of the world were discussed. Austria and Spain were at variance about certain Italian principalities. They accepted, on the duke's suggestion, a compromise, and their differences ceased. Spain and Portugal, likewise at strife, were reconciled; and an attempt was made, without success, to mediate between Spain and her revolted colonies. It was while he occupied himself in these laudable efforts, that the duke narrowly escaped the second attempt upon his life. He occupied a house in the Champs Elysées, the same from which, in 1848, Le Grange fired upon the troops the pistol-shot which may be said to have begun the revolution of that year. The entrance to it was under a covered passage, the gate of which stood square towards the street; presenting a somewhat awkward means of approach, except to a skilful driver. It happened that on the 11th of February, 1818, the duke dined with Sir Charles Stuart. He retired from the party about half-past twelve o'clock, and drove straight home. The night was dark, and the streets were not lighted, as they are now, with gas; but by oil lamps, one of which hung in the courtyard of the house. The light which it shed discovered a man who darted across the street in front of the carriage, and took up his station within the gateway; and the coachman, suspicious that all could not be right, flogged his horses and drove rapidly. No sooner was the carriage well under the arch, than a pistol was fired, but without effect. The duke heard the report, looked out, and saw the person who had discharged it turn and run away. Before the horses could be stopped, and a pursuit undertaken, he disappeared in the darkness: he was safe for the night.

The police was at once communicated with, and an active search for the assassin began. It was known that a knot of suspected persons had arrived a few days previously from Brussels, and among the rest a person named Cantillon, formerly a non-commissioned officer in the Imperial army. Upon him suspicion fell, and being arrested and shown to the duke's servants they immediately identified him. He was committed to prison, and an assurance given that no means would be omitted of discovering his accomplices and bringing them likewise to justice. There is nothing to show that the French Government desired to push its inquiries in that direction very vigorously. Cantillon was understood to be an agent of the

society which had its chief seat in Brussels, which had repeatedly, in its publications, recommended the use of the dagger, and with which a confidential aide-de-camp of the Prince of Orange was known to be connected. A peremptory demand for the arrest of these persons could scarcely, under the circumstances, have been evaded. But the French Government, by what motive actuated I cannot pretend to say, made no such demand. The consequence was that all who lay open to suspicion, wisely fled; and Cantillon was left alone to answer for the attempted murder.

Cantillon was in due time brought to trial, and in the teeth of evidence which, anywhere except in the Paris of 1818, would have proved his guilt, was acquitted. I might here close my account of this discreditable affair, did not the truth of history demand that its sequel, both immediate and more remote, should be placed on record. The news of the attempted assassination no sooner got abroad than every member of the royal family of France waited upon the duke, with one remarkable exception. Louis Philippe, Duke of Orleans, paid him no visit of congratulation; but, by and by, after he ascended the throne, bestowed upon Cantillon the place of gamekeeper at Fontainebleau. Nor were either Napoleon I. or Napoleon III. unmindful of the patriot. The former, by a codicil to his will, executed at St. Helena, and proved in Doctors' Commons, bequeathed to Cantillon, in approval of the act, a legacy of 10,000 francs, which the latter, a quarter of a century afterwards, paid, with all the interest accruing thereon, to his representatives.

There was, however, a person on whom these occurrences wrought with terrible effect. The Prince of Orange felt overwhelmed with grief and shame. He wrote to the duke, entreating him to believe that he neither was, nor ever could have been, a party to such proceedings. His associations with the republicans had never, he protested, been more than a sentiment, of which he now acknowledged the weakness. As may well be imagined, the duke entertained no suspicion of the complicity of his old aide-de-camp in the crime of assassination, and he hastened to reassure him on that head. He even promised to visit him, in order to convince the world that a perfect understanding still subsisted between them, and suggested that an excellent opportunity was afforded of becoming reconciled to the king his father. It does not appear that the Prince of Orange and the Duke of Wellington met, either at Cambray or at Zœstdyke, on that occasion; but the duke was soon afterwards gratified by hearing that the reconciliation which he had

advised had been effected, and that the prince ceased to entertain any more unnatural leanings towards ultra-liberalism.

It will be seen from these details that the time of the duke, while he remained at the head of the army in France, was much more given to the management of civil than of military affairs. For the exercise of his talents as a general no scope, indeed, was afforded. Broils here and there occurred—personal quarrels between the French and the foreign troops, or between the foreign troops and the inhabitants. But no attempt at an armed rising occurred, nor was occasion given, so much as once, to concentrate in order to suppress it. Occasional reviews, some of them on a large scale, with the steady maintenance of discipline in quarters, alone called for the exercise of his soldierly abilities. For the exceeding regularity with which supplies came in, and the systematic manner in which accounts were kept and settled, soon obviated the necessity of mediating between the troops and the country people. There followed upon this a far more kindly spirit than had at first been manifested on either side. Private quarrels grew rare. British and German officers began to mix in a friendly manner in civic and rural fêtes. Conspirators grew weary of conspiring. The French people became reconciled to their government—the government seemed more and more to trust the people. Even the adjustment of claims appeared to be acquiesced in, and the terms of the treaty of 1815 were either fulfilled or put in the way of fulfilment. What need could there be for a continued occupation of the French soil by foreign bayonets? The duke conceived that there was no need. In the congress which met in the winter of 1818 at Aix-la-Chapelle, he delivered in a written memorandum to that effect, and it was immediately acted upon. The army of occupation broke up. The duke voluntarily relinquished a post of great political importance and large emolument, which a word of remonstrance would have secured to him for two years longer, and France was left to her own resources, with every prospect of becoming again a great and prosperous nation.

All this while the duke's life in private differed little from what we have seen that it was when carrying on the war in Portugal and Spain, and in the country between the Bidassoa and the Garonne. His hospitalities might be on a larger scale, his guests were undoubtedly more varied, but whomsoever he received at his table his manners continued to be as simple and as kind as in former years. He was waited upon as a matter of course by every stranger of note who from any part of the world

found his way to Paris. His English visitors included Sir Walter, then Mr. Scott, Moore, Rogers, Siddons, John Kemble, Madame Catalani, all of whom partook of his generous fare, and were charmed with his conversation. But although the duke himself was invariably kind and considerate, the young gentlemen composing his household appear sometimes to have disapproved of the company which he kept. Like children spoiled by too much indulgence, they ventured more than once to make this sentiment known by retiring from the salon before the party broke up, and leaving him to entertain his friends single-handed. Good-natured as he was, that measure proved rather too strong even for the duke. So one day the aides-de-camp were a good deal startled by receiving each a copy of a written circular which required the attendance of the whole body upon their chief at ten o'clock next morning, arrayed in full-dress uniform. Now it so happened that among these boys there were several who had never taken the trouble to provide themselves with full-dress uniforms. They had their frocks, which they put on when following the duke to reviews, and they always dressed, as indeed he did himself, in plain clothes, to receive his parties at home. Great, therefore, was the consternation of the conclave, and vast the exertions made to beg or borrow the necessary habiliments in which to meet their chief. At last the dreaded moment came, and the duke, looking somewhat sternly round, spoke his mind. He had been surprised and indignant that the gentlemen of his staff should show themselves inattentive to his guests. It was their duty to serve him as well in the domestic circle as elsewhere, and he expected that for the future they would conduct themselves as they knew that he wished them to do.

The young men looked very foolish, but took, as they were bound to do, his reproof in good part, and it is fair to add, that from that day forth no one, not even the most sensitive individual who had the honour of sitting at the duke's table, found reason to consider himself slighted by the members of the duke's family.

Though cured of behaving rudely, these lads were by no means cured of playing practical jokes upon all persons, high and low, who seemed to present fair butts to their wit. Among others, they tried to get Sir Sidney Smith into a scrape, and but for the duke they would have succeeded. The gallant admiral, as is well known, though one of the bravest, was one of the vainest men of the age. He was in Paris, and received an invitation to a ball which the duke was about to give; and he received

more. A letter reached him the same day, professing to come from the Sublime Porte, in which it was announced that in consideration of his eminent services at Acre, the Sultan had been pleased to confer upon him the order of the Key. By and by a box arrived, containing a key carefully wrapped up in gilded paper, and having a broad ribbon attached. The key happened to be very rusty, and the circumstance was accounted for by a statement in writing, that the box had unfortunately been wetted with sea water in its passage from Constantinople.

The gallant admiral received the present, as it was anticipated that he would; and being desirous of obtaining some other authority than his own for wearing the order, he proceeded to the duke's house and asked his advice. The duke saw at once into the whole matter; and a sore trial it was to a man endowed with a keen sense of the ridiculous, to keep his gravity. But he put a restraint upon his feelings, pretended to be exceedingly angry, and advised Sir Sidney not to wear the key. He was convulsed with laughter when he met the culprits at dinner, and often told the story afterwards with admirable humour.

The duke had his hunting days at and near Cambray, as regularly as he used to have them on the banks of the Agueda. The meets were well attended, and often led to excellent sport. He gave every encouragement likewise to the theatrical performances which were got up in Cambray itself, chiefly under the management of Mr. Commissioner Fonblanque, then an officer in the 21st Fusiliers. But all this came to an end in due time. The army of occupation broke up as I have stated; the duke took leave of it in a valedictory address, and never again assumed the direction of troops in the immediate presence of an enemy.

CHAPTER XXIX

TROUBLESOME TIMES—CATO STREET—QUEEN CAROLINE

We turn a page in the biography of this great man, and find ourselves called upon to follow him through long years spent in the struggles of party, and amid the anxieties and disappointments of political life.

There are those among the most ardent of his admirers who conceive, that for his own sake, if not for the sake of the country, it would have been well had that course been avoided. His habits, they assert, were formed out of England, and in a condition of things essentially un-English. He had undergone no training worthy of the name in the House of Commons, and never could have found leisure to study, as they require to be studied, the laws and constitution of his country. Perhaps this is in the main true. But how was it possible for the Duke of Wellington, so long the referee to the king's ministers in questions of foreign policy, to withdraw into private life while yet in the vigour of his days? That the duke should have become a party politician may be a subject of regret. Able men, entertaining the same views with himself, thought so when he first fell into that category. They considered the position unworthy of one who for a quarter of a century had stood far above party and its claims. But the great question to be answered is, could the thing be avoided? I think not. A ministry so feeble as that of which Lord Liverpool was the head threw itself for support upon the prestige of the duke's great name. They gave him no time to consider what course would be best, either for himself or for the country, but inveigled him, if I may so express myself, into the cabinet, under the pretext of securing to it the best opinion which Europe could supply on military subjects. He was still commander-in-chief of the army of occupation, when the master-generalship of the ordnance was pressed upon him, in a manner which, as they well knew, precluded the possibility of a refusal. And so, on his return home, he found himself wrapped round in a net from which he never afterwards broke away; and from which, use having reconciled

him to the position, he never perhaps desired to break away, till disappointment and the increasing infirmities of age warned him that his day of labour was done.

The interval between 1818 and 1820 is one on which no lover of his country now looks back except with regret. It was a season of change from war with its profuse expenditure to peace, bringing not plenty, but forced public economy in its train; and in the manipulation of that interval all parties in the state, Tories and Whigs, the friends of government and its enemies, committed grievous blunders. The people entirely uneducated, and goaded on by want, and by the harangues of demagogues, plotted and schemed for the overthrow of the monarchy, and were restrained from carrying their designs into execution only by measures of the harshest repression. Columns of regular troops traversed the manufacturing and mining districts to disperse nightly drillings and over-awe disaffection. And mobs, being charged by yeomanry cavalry, offered resistance, and were cut down. It would not be fair to try by the standard of our own times and ideas the proceedings either of rulers or of subjects forty years ago. The statesmen of that day had been eye-witnesses, so to speak, of the first French Revolution, and were too much afraid of the recurrence of its atrocities to shrink from any measures, however stern, which promised to avert them. The masses, never having heard of the term "moral power," and being ignorant how to exercise the thing itself, thought only amid their sufferings, real or imaginary, of appealing to brute force. Hence the struggle between order and confusion, rudely conducted on both sides, and leading to the enactments of laws such as no parliament in these days could be persuaded to pass, nor any magistrates to carry into effect.' Why should I go, even shortly, over ground which has so little to attract? Rather let me content myself with saying, that the duke, as was natural, adopted the views of his colleagues throughout these years of trouble; that whether agreeing with them or dissenting from them while points were discussed in the cabinet, he stood by them manfully when they came to a decision; and that he gave them the benefit of his counsel, in so marshalling and directing the military force at their disposal, that no serious risings anywhere took place, and very few lives were sacrificed.

The troubles of 1818 and 1819 were incident mainly to commercial depression. With increasing prosperity in the manufacturing districts came a respite from such troubles.

But the people had been too carefully taught to connect their own sufferings with abuses in the machinery of the government to be reconciled, in prosperity, to the constitution as it was; and the prince regent was personally odious to them. The death of George III. brought this latter feeling strongly to light.

George III. died on the 28th of December, 1820; George IV. was immediately proclaimed; and in less than three weeks dangers threatened the state from two very different quarters. It was discovered that for some time back a band of desperate men had met nightly in a garret in Cato Street, and that they were plotting the assassination of the king and of all the members of his cabinet. At first they made a distribution of the bloody work, each conspirator undertaking to make away with a particular victim; and this circumstance it is which induces me to dwell at all upon the insane project. For the duke had a narrow escape. "It came out upon the examination," said the duke, telling the story at Walmer Castle, "that I was to be taken care of by Mr. Ings. Mr. Ings, it seems, had watched me often, but never caught me alone, till one afternoon in the beginning of February he saw me leave the Ordnance Office. He crossed the street and walked after me, intending, when I got into the Green Park, to stab me from behind. But before reaching St. James's Palace, a gentleman with only one arm met me, and turning round, walked with me through the park to Apsley House. Mr. Ings was afraid, in the circumstances, to go on with his job, and I escaped. And all this I quite believe, for I recollect meeting Lord Fitzroy Somerset that day; and just as we resumed our walk, I saw a suspicious-looking person pass us and go up St. James's Street."

"And what about the conspiracy itself, Duke?"

"You all know how it went on, and by what process it was stopped. I proposed a different plan, but my colleagues did not like it. We were masters, by this time, of all their secrets, and knew that they intended to break in upon us at a cabinet dinner at Lord Harrowby's, and put us all to death. My proposal was to get a body of police quietly into the house, to send our despatch-boxes there, each containing a brace of pistols, and to let them come. I thought it the readiest way of catching them in a trap, without creating alarm elsewhere. My colleagues, however, were of a different opinion, and perhaps they were right."

The other peril, if a peril it deserves to be called, arose immediately out of the domestic differences between George IV. and

Queen Caroline. Time has long since settled the merits of that quarrel. A profligate and selfish prince, prevented by circumstances from ridding himself by legitimate means of a profligate and violent princess, endeavoured by means which were not legitimate to crush her; and his ministers, weakly lending themselves to his humours, stretched the law to the verge of injustice, and failed. The duke's part in that wretched drama was a subordinate one. He met the queen's attorney-general, Mr., now Lord, Brougham, and proposed terms of a compromise, which were rejected; and he drew round London the cordon of troops, which were to put down violence, should serious violence be attempted. But disapproving, as he did, the whole of the king's proceedings, he held as much as possible aloof from discussing them. An expression dropped in the course of debate in the House of Lords brought down upon him, it is true, a sudden burst of obloquy. The queen was of course the idol of the mob; many petitions came in, in her favour, and among the rest, one from Hampshire, containing 9000 signatures. Now the duke had recently been appointed to the Lieutenancy of Hampshire, and it was charged against him by an opposition peer, that he discountenanced the getting up of a county petition. His answer, though very characteristic, was not perhaps very prudent. After showing that the House was already in possession of a petition numerously and respectably signed, he added, that he did not see what purpose could be served after that, by going through the farce of a county meeting. It was by mistakes like this, trifling in themselves, yet offering a ready handle to the ill-disposed, that the duke sometimes showed his lack of training in what may be called parliamentary tactics. The words were much commented upon at the time, and were often afterwards recalled, to prove either that the speaker did not know what the rights of the people were, or else knowing held them in entire disrespect.

CHAPTER XXX

THE DUKE IN THE CABINET—AT VERONA

The larger edition of this work has told how the questions of parliamentary reform and free trade assumed about this time a tangible shape; and how the claims of Roman Catholics to be admitted to the rights of citizenship, independently of religious opinion, acquired day by day an increasing number of advocates.

What the duke's real sentiments were in 1821 regarding parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, it would perhaps be difficult to determine. He did not leave the cabinet when Lord John Russell's proposal was resisted; and the franchise forfeited at Grampound was transferred not to Leeds, but to Yorkshire. Neither did he vote in the cabinet, or in the House of Lords, with those of his colleagues who approved of the entire removal of Roman Catholic disabilities. But on the other hand, as he declined a proposal to assume the chief direction of affairs in Ireland, with a view to put down sedition there, and to maintain the supremacy of the laws as they stood, so on the subject of gradually extending the franchise to large towns, he never uttered a word to show that he disapproved of the project. Putting these two circumstances together, and looking to the tone of his correspondence in earlier years, the fair inference is that his mind was by no means made up on either point. With respect to free trade the case is different. He opposed the abolition of the Company's monopoly in China, for reasons which were rather political than commercial, and every successive year seemed only more and more to confirm his predilections in favour of protection to British agriculture. It must be admitted, however, that up to 1822, and beyond it, the duke appears scarcely to have bestowed much attention upon questions purely fiscal. His politics were still those of the Foreign Office, and he became in consequence a frequent medium of communication between his own and continental governments. He was not indeed present at the Congress of Trappau. The English Government was little desirous of taking part in that conclave, which met to consider how the revolutionary

spirit could best be put down in Europe. For the revolutionary spirit was charged with having brought about in Spain and Portugal that impatience under absolute rule which soon extended into Italy, and which, like most feelings long pent up and suddenly triumphant, became the cause in both countries of many abuses. By and by, however, when Louis XVIII. was assembling an army on the Spanish frontier, the duke took advantage of an official visit to the fortresses in the Netherlands, and passed on to Paris. He had there some interesting conversation with the French king and his ministers, and prevailed so far as to induce the king to make a statement of the minimum of his demands. "If you can get the Spaniards to accept their constitution as a gift from the crown, instead of forcing it upon the crown as the will of the people, we may come to terms. Neither shall we withdraw our ambassador from Madrid as the other powers threaten to do." This was something; time at least was gained by it, and the reason of the concession M. Guizot has assigned. "Louis XVIII.," he says in his political reminiscences, "placed entire confidence in the judgment and friendly feeling of the Duke of Wellington." Yet Louis XVIII. did not let the duke go without giving utterance to words of which the meaning was pretty obvious. "Louis XIV.," he said, "levelled the Pyrenees; I shall not allow them to be raised again. He placed my family on the throne of Spain, I cannot let them fall. The other sovereigns have not the same duties to fulfil. My ambassador ought not to quit Madrid until the day when 100,000 Frenchmen are on their march to replace him."

The duke's visit to Paris at this time was followed by an incident which is interesting only so far as it furnished him, in after life, with an opportunity of telling a story to which his peculiar manner of expressing himself gave remarkable zest. George IV., after a brief sojourn among his Irish subjects, proceeded to Hanover; and passing through Brussels was there met by the duke, who conducted him over the Field of Waterloo. The duke explained to the king all the movements in the battle, and pointed out to him the spots where men of note had fallen on both sides. "His Majesty took it very coolly," he used to say; "he never asked me a single question, nor said one word, until I showed him where Lord Anglesea's leg was buried, and then he burst into tears."

Though holding an inferior place in the cabinet, and exhibiting little desire to take the lead in its deliberations, the duke's influence with the king was by this time very great. It was

for him or for Lord Castlereagh, not for Lord Liverpool, that his Majesty, when he had any important communication to make, usually sent; and on most subjects, particularly on those affecting the foreign relations of the country, the duke and Lord Castlereagh thought alike. The time was come, however, when circumstances were about to force the duke into a more prominent place as a politician. The session of 1822 appeared to have overtaxed Lord Castlereagh's powers of mind. The internal condition of the British Empire troubled him, as did the state of continental Europe, and indeed of the world at large. He had agreed to attend a congress at Vienna in the autumn, at which many important subjects should be discussed. But as the moment approached for setting out upon the journey, his courage failed him. At last the whole country was horrified by learning that he had destroyed himself in his house at Foot's Cray. No man felt the shock of that blow more severely than the duke. He seems to have been apprehensive for some time back that a catastrophe of the kind was possible, for he warned Lord Castlereagh's medical adviser to be upon his guard, and tried to soothe the anxieties of his friend, by proposing to become himself Lord Castlereagh's substitute at the congress. The crash came however, and its immediate effect was to place the duke, somewhat against his will, in the front rank of the administration. He became from that time forth a leading statesman, and the first use which he made of the authority thereby conceded to him, was to support Lord Liverpool in bringing back to the cabinet Mr. Canning, who at the period of the queen's trial had retired from it.

Mr. Canning was not in all respects a favourite with the duke, who admired his talents, but distrusted his political honesty. The terms of intimacy in which he lived with many of the leaders of the opposition offended the duke's notions of what party fidelity ought to be. But aware of the need that there was of eloquence in the cabinet, and not desiring to see Canning either shelved in India, or thrust into the opposition, he approved of Lord Liverpool's inviting him to become Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the invitation was accepted. The duke, therefore, when he quitted London in September, 1822, carried with him a letter of instructions which Mr. Canning had signed, but which had been drawn up by Lord Castlereagh, and accepted word for word by Lord Castlereagh's successor. I have thought it necessary to make these statements, because Mr. Canning, at a later period, took credit to himself in the House

of Commons for a policy which was in point of fact that of Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington. Indeed there never was a time throughout his long life, when the duke was not entirely opposed to interference in the internal affairs of other nations. He was no admirer, certainly, of revolutions, and entertained a fixed dread of democracy; but as he always objected either to promote or to stop a revolution elsewhere, so he was always ready to enter into relations with the *de facto* governments of foreign states;—whether, as in Portugal under Don Miguel, these took the form of absolutism, or assumed, as in the Spanish colonies of South America, a purely republican shape.

The reader who is curious to know what the duke, as the representative of Great Britain, did at Paris, in Vienna, and subsequently at Verona, must consult the larger edition of this work, where alone, I believe, among existing publications the tale has been told correctly and at length. For the present I content myself with saying that he laboured when in Paris to stop the invasion of Spain, that failing in that object, he obtained an assurance that France would not call upon the northern powers to help her, and that he thereby confined the war which followed within the limits of the Peninsula, where it soon came to an end. In Vienna he discussed with the Emperor of Russia the Greek question then rising into importance, and prevailed upon him to refrain from taking part with the insurgents by attacking Turkey. As to the Spanish colonies then in the depth of their struggle for independence, he contented himself with explaining clearly what England proposed to do. And finally on the subject of the slave-trade, for the abolition of which the English people were then clamorous, he was obliged to accept the personal assurance of the sovereigns of Russia, Prussia, and even of France, that they abhorred it, and were ready to re-issue the joint proclamation, which in 1815 had pronounced it to be "a disgrace to humanity."

A great deal of what I have in substance stated occurred in Paris and at Vienna. In the latter city the duke met kings and emperors in semi-private interviews, and the arguments which he addressed to them were repeated more at length when the congress assembled formally at Verona. Into the discussion of one not unimportant point, however, the duke steadily refused to be drawn. Italy was then occupied by Austrian troops, and the sovereigns, wishing to withdraw them, desired to consult the duke as to the best mode of doing so. Now, as England

had never consented to the overthrow by foreign bayonets of liberal institutions in Italy, so the duke declined to give an opinion, or even to be present, when the subject of the return of these troops to their own homes was discussed. The duke incurred great odium amongst the continental powers by thus holding back; indeed they did not hesitate to accuse constitutional England of making common cause through him with the revolutionists all over the world.

A story is told of the duke's journey from Vienna to Verona, which is curious if it be true. At first he hesitated whether, having been invited to meet the sovereigns in the former city, it would be becoming in him to attend them to the latter. But a little reflection seems to have reassured him on that head, and he announced to the home government his determination; of which they approved. He was in the midst of his preparations when Mr. William Allen, a Quaker gentleman of great notoriety, walked into his apartment. Mr. Allen had for years written and spoken on the subject of the slave-trade. Every public man in England knew him, and he was a correspondent of most of the princes and statesmen of the continent. "Well, Mr. Allen," asked the duke, "what can I do for you?" "I must go to Verona," was the answer. "But you can't do that. Haven't you read the proclamation, that only persons attached to one or other of the embassies will be admitted into the city." "Friend, I must go to Verona, and thou must take me." "Very well, if I must I must; but the only way in which I can help you, is to make you one of my couriers. If you like to ride forward in that capacity, you may do so." The story goes on to say, that the Quaker closed with the proposal, that he rode a stage in front of the duke all the way to Verona, and that having gained the *entrée*, he lectured kings and emperors, and their ministers, daily on the iniquity of the slave-trade.

One other fact well deserves to be recorded, because it is characteristic not only of the man, but of the age in which he lived. A dead-set was made at the duke throughout his residence in Verona, to win him by the blandishments of women, as well as by the not very creditable proposals of men, to yield certain points on which his mind was made up. "Do these people know me?" he exclaimed indignantly one day, bursting into the room of one of his attachés; "what do they take me for, that they insult me with such a proposal as that?" throwing down a note, marked confidential in the handwriting of an eminent statesman. And so it was with the ladies. Some of

the most beautiful and fascinating women in Europe made Verona glad with their presence, and all beset the duke, but to no purpose. He met their advances half way, played with them to his heart's content, but kept his own counsel. They got nothing out of him, except what he was free to give without the slightest approach to a breach of the confidence reposed in him elsewhere.

The point of all others on which the duke was most pressed had reference to Spain, and the proper mode of dealing with her. France took the lead in this discussion, and submitted to her allies three proposals, to each of which she requested a categorical reply. They all tended to war, and Austria, Prussia, and Russia assented to them each after its own fashion. But the duke was entirely opposed to war. He showed in a well-written state-paper, that so long as Spain and Portugal refrained from molesting or threatening their neighbours, it would be an act not only unjust but unwise to compel them by force of arms to change their form of government. He might as well have reasoned with the winds. The Bourbons were bent on maintaining what they held to be the dignity of their family. Austria, Prussia, and Russia were beside themselves with fear of liberalism. The duke and the country which he represented were denounced as the abettors of anarchy, because they refused to join in a crusade against free institutions everywhere.

Of the temper of the continental powers at that time towards England some idea will be formed, if we observe the eagerness with which their representatives took up and circulated among themselves reports injurious to her honour. One of these reports, which proved a frequent subject of conversation in Verona, deserves, from its very absurdity, to be specified. There was a Spanish gentleman, a M. Carnacero, with whom the duke had formed an acquaintance in Paris, and who, happening to arrive at Vienna while he was there, called upon him, and not unnaturally discussed with him the state and prospects of his own country. The visits of that gentleman to the duke's hotel had not passed unobserved, and now finding how determined the duke was not to commit his government to a policy of intervention, a story was got up in Verona, that M. Carnacero had been employed to conclude with him a convention, whereby England engaged in return for certain commercial and other privileges to support the cause of Spain against France at the congress. The tale, as I need scarcely stop to

observe, had no foundation whatever in fact, though the English newspapers would appear to have given some countenance to it.

Such was one of the silly rumours in spreading which ministers and attachés sought to avenge themselves on the integrity of the duke and the ultra-liberalism of the government which he represented. Another, of a graver nature, scarcely admits of so clear an explanation. There had been some correspondence of late between the Portuguese Government and Mr. Canning on the subject of the treaty by which England was bound to defend Portugal against foreign invasion. In the course of this correspondence the Portuguese minister informed Mr. Canning that he was about to conclude an alliance offensive and defensive with Spain, and requested to be informed how far such alliance would effect the guarantee. But before any answer could be sent to the question, he communicated the fact that the alliance had actually been concluded. The peninsular nations, equally with the allies, made as much of this correspondence as its terms would warrant. They arrived at the same conclusion—that Mr. Canning had pledged his government to defend Portugal against invasion from France, even if by joining Spain in a war of aggression she should bring the evil on herself. The duke, of course, declared that he did not so read Mr. Canning's assurances; nevertheless he considered the matter to be so important that he wrote home about it, and advised Mr. Canning to embrace the earliest opportunity of putting himself and the British Cabinet right before the rest of Europe.

Before bringing this brief sketch of the Congress of Verona to an end, I may be allowed to state that the minds of the continental sovereigns and their ministers were too much engrossed with schemes for the repression of revolutionary principles in Europe, to admit of their paying the slightest attention to the duke's proposals in regard to the Spanish South-American colonies. They read his paper, which was drawn up in the spirit of his instructions, and which he handed in at the meeting of the 26th of November; but they declined to take it into consideration, contenting themselves with the remark, "That it was a subject of deep regret to them that England should stand forth as the protector of Jacobins in all parts of the world; and that they (the allies) had neither the power nor the inclination to prevent it." It is scarcely necessary to add that the coolness which was already apparent on their side suffered no abatement in consequence of this com-

munication, and that the duke withdrew from among them more dissatisfied than ever with the turn which affairs had taken, and more distrustful of its issues.

Satisfied that he could do no more good at Verona, the duke took his leave of the Emperors of Russia and of Austria, the former on the 27th, the latter on the 28th of November. They parted excellent friends personally, but just as widely separated on public questions as they had been when they met. He made, however, one effort more to avert the danger with which the peace of Europe was threatened, by appealing again to the French Government as he passed through Paris, and by communicating privately, soon after his return to London, with General Alava and others of his friends in Spain. But both the French and the Spanish Governments proved obstinate. France, indeed, indicated something more than a fixed resolution to coerce Spain. She spoke in a tone of suspicion of the extraordinary zeal of the English in hunting down pirates in the Caribbean seas, and warned the duke that she would never consent to an increase of British territory in that direction, even if it were made over as the price of the English alliance with Spain. To this line of argument the duke replied by assuring the French minister that for accessions of territory in the Caribbean seas, or elsewhere, England had no wish; that she would not accept Cuba as a gift, if it were offered; and that the project of selling her support to the Spanish Government for such a price had been entertained neither by England nor by Spain. With respect to Spain, all that he could offer was advice, which he conveyed in a friendly letter, of which Lord Fitzroy Somerset was the bearer. But Spanish pride could not consent to yield even to the duke's entreaties what France had demanded with arms in her hand. The results are well known. A French army entered Spain, the Spanish liberals found themselves unsupported by the bulk of the nation, and Ferdinand was reinstated in absolute power, which he subsequently used to abrogate the Salique law, and to change the succession in favour of his daughter.

CHAPTER XXXI

LORD LIVERPOOL'S ADMINISTRATION

Two not unimportant results, so far as the duke was personally concerned, ensued upon his mission to Verona. He was furiously attacked in the House of Lords for having betrayed the liberties of Europe, and defended himself in a speech which, both because of its length and because of the logical tenor of its arguments, gained for him great applause, and encouraged him to speak again. On the other hand the divergence of his general policy from that of Mr. Canning became every day more marked. The duke, having failed to avert the invasion of Spain and the subsequent revolution in Portugal, which restored absolutism, was indisposed to move further. Mr. Canning, accepting both incidents as personal wrongs to himself, threatened war, or at all events the non-recognition of things as they were. It was under the pressure of this feeling, indeed, that he made in the House of Commons his famous announcement, which had really nothing to recommend it except the eloquence with which it was uttered. It was not Mr. Canning who "called the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old," for the Spanish colonies had achieved their own independence without him; and whether Spain had been overrun by France or not, the establishment in these colonies of consular agents by Great Britain had long been determined upon. But the announcement itself, and still more the tone in which it was delivered, offended the duke; and the duke, once seriously offended, was not easily reconciled. He had somewhat distrusted Mr. Canning before; he distrusted him to a much greater degree now. And circumstances continually occurred to deepen this feeling. It appeared to the duke that a minister has no business to exchange ideas, on questions still under consideration in the cabinet, with the leaders of the opposite party, and, rightly or wrongly, he came to the conclusion that such was Mr. Canning's practice.

It is no business of mine to determine how far the duke's suspicions were or were not well founded. There cannot be a

doubt, however, that the condition of the cabinet itself was very little satisfactory to one trained as he had been. It was divided into three sections, not one of which reposed entire confidence in any other. Mr. Canning, Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Robinson, and their followers, advocated liberalism at home and abroad. They were supporters of the Catholic claims, favoured the entire repeal of restrictions upon commerce, and were desirous of pressing constitutional governments upon all the nations of the world. Diametrically opposed to the Canningites, were the ministers of what may be called the old Tory party; viz., Lord Eldon, Lord Westmoreland, Lord Bathurst, and perhaps Mr. Peel. I say, perhaps, because, whatever Mr. Peel's opinions might have been in 1822-23, they underwent before long great modification. These statesmen were opposed to any further concessions to the Roman Catholics. They deprecated interference with the established laws affecting trade and navigation; and they looked with disfavour on every attempt on the continent of Europe to give to the people a voice in the management of their own affairs. And lastly, there were the Grenvillites, liberal as regarded the laws against Roman Catholics, but indifferent, to say the least, on questions of commercial policy, and by no means disposed to risk old alliances for the sake of giving constitutions to foreign states.

It has been commonly supposed that the Duke of Wellington threw the weight of his influence into the scale of the old Tories. This is a great mistake. The duke had no objection on principle, provided the way was made plain before him, to repeal the disqualifying enactments which shut out the king's Roman Catholic subjects from parliament and from places of authority and trust under the crown; and on questions of trade and navigation, his mind was only so far made up, that he desired to preserve for England her traditionary superiority at sea, and to maintain the landed aristocracy as the preponderating influence in the state. But he was always ready to consider on their own merits such questions as his colleagues might bring forward; and to bow to the decision of the majority, so long as a great principle was not at issue.

Finally, in regard to foreign politics, his was the true doctrine of non-intervention. He argued thus: "It is no concern of ours what forms of government other nations think fit to set up. If they prefer despotism, let them keep it. If they succeed in replacing despotism with free institutions, don't let us interfere. Our sole duty is to see that they observe existing treaties,

and afford to the king's subjects, when mixing with them, protection to life and property."

Holding these opinions, and making no secret of holding them, he stood apart from the three rival sections, and generally mediated among them. This was not always an easy task, and it proved the more difficult that the king not only had his own views of things, often at variance with the decisions of his cabinet, but, with excessive wrong-headedness, was in the habit of intriguing for their accomplishment, as well with the leaders of the opposition as with individual ministers on whom he felt that he could make an impression. The effect upon a man so high-minded as the duke was such, that over and over again he thought seriously of letting things take their course. Indeed, it was only a strong sense of duty which restrained him from breaking up the government by retiring from it. For on one point his convictions were settled. He did not believe that the Whigs, as a party, were strong enough to conduct the government, except by forcing on measures which must lead to a radical change in the principles of the constitution; and as he entertained a nervous apprehension of such changes, of which he had seen the fatal results in continental states, he kept his place in the cabinet, that he might urge upon his colleagues the necessity of bearing with one another, and of making all possible concessions, rather than allow power to pass into hands which would certainly abuse it.

Such were the circumstances under which that current of legislation set in, of which the final issues could never be doubtful. Law after law was repealed under the shelter of which England was supposed to have risen to the height of her commercial prosperity, till, subject to one remarkable reservation, the axiom began to be received, that, among nations not less than among individuals, they act the wisest part who buy in the cheapest market and sell in the dearest.

All this while other and more urgent cares pressed the government from the side of Ireland. In 1823, and for many years afterwards, that portion of the empire was in the most deplorable condition. Her aristocracy had become almost universally bankrupt, her energies were paralysed, her commerce stagnant. She could boast of no manufactures, except in the north, and a population terribly redundant existed, but could scarcely be said to live. The staple food of a cottier tenantry was the potato, which the lands, let and sub-let, till they reached the lowest point of occupancy, supplied, but never in excess. Hence

a single bad harvest was invariably followed by distress, which, if the season continued unfavourable into a second year, produced a famine. Moreover, as there was no law which gave to the indigent a claim on their parishes against starvation, mendicancy became universal, or nearly so, among the humbler classes. After scratching up the earth and planting the potato in the plot of ground which surrounded their cabins, whole families went forth year by year to beg; or else they crossed the Channel at harvest-time into England and Scotland, in the hope of earning there money enough to pay the exorbitant rents, for which they had made themselves liable. Meanwhile two rival churches, each by a process of its own, wrung from this mendicant population the means of subsistence for their clergy. From the entire population, of which its members comprised one-sixth, the Established Church took tithes, and was aided by the law in doing so; while from four-and-a-half out of the five remaining sixths, the Roman Catholic Church exacted fees quite as large in amount as the tithes; of which it enforced the payment by the application of threats more terrible than human law could hold out. Is it to be wondered at, if both burdens, but especially the former, were borne impatiently?

The obvious remedies for evils such as these, are encouragement to emigration, a legal provision for the poor, a compulsory commutation of tithes, the introduction of capital into the country, and with it the establishment of manufactures, and of an improved system of agriculture. There must necessarily follow upon all this, such a pressure on the landlord class as shall compel the needy to dispose of their estates, and transfer the property in the soil to men better able, and more willing, to improve it. As yet, however, visions of this sort seem scarcely to have entered into the minds of the most imaginative of our statesmen. A law was indeed passed, authorising landowners and tithe proprietors in Ireland to arrange between themselves, if so disposed, plans of commutation; which, when fully settled and registered, were to be binding on them and on their successors.[1] But except in this particular, which as far as it went proved useful enough, no steps were taken to better the condition of the Irish people, who became in consequence an easy prey to

[1] The law in question, Mr. Goulburn's Act, was accepted by upwards of 1500 parishes; and so well and justly were the commutations settled, that only six appeals were made, of which four were dismissed; in one the amount of tithes was raised, and only in one lowered.

every demagogue, possessed of the small measure of talent which was necessary to work upon their credulity and abuse it.

Among these there was one, whose success as an agitator has never been equalled in modern times, but who was either too wise or too wary to aim at a prouder name, by becoming the leader of a rebellion. Daniel O'Connell, after various preliminary experiments, succeeded in establishing the Catholic Association, and then brought, by means of it, the whole weight of the masses, headed by the priesthood, to bear upon one point. How the society was constituted and worked, and to what end it was directed, it is not the business of this biography to explain. Enough is done when I state that its affairs were managed with such exceeding skill that its leaders, while they kept all Ireland in a state of excitement, were themselves placed beyond the reach of interference by the law and its officers.

From that time forth the ingenuity of Lord Liverpool's cabinet was taxed to meet the difficulties of a case which has scarcely a parallel in history. It could not be said that Ireland was in a state of insurrection, because the people, though completely organised, professed nothing but loyalty to the throne. Here and there, indeed, individuals were forced to give up their holdings, while houses were broken into, and arms and ammunition carried off. But outrages of this sort were of old standing, nor could the government entertain greater abhorrence of them than was expressed by Mr. O'Connell, and his subordinate agents in the movement.

Meanwhile the Protestant section of the Irish community was not idle. Complaining that their rulers had deserted them, they combined for self-defence, and through their Orange lodges, held language quite as determined as that of the Catholic Association. Though in point of numbers inconsiderable, as compared with their rivals, they possessed by far the larger share of the property, and almost all the political influence of the country. Hence every effort made to conciliate, or even to deal fairly by the Roman Catholics, brought down upon the government the hostility of the Orangemen; while the promotion of an Orangeman to place, or even his friendly reception at the Viceregal Court, exasperated the Roman Catholic mind, and called forth volumes of abuse from its great director.

Ever since the passing of the Act of Union, there had been bitter complaints on the part of the Irish Roman Catholics, that faith had not been kept with them. This was not in strict propriety the fact, for whatever Mr. Pitt's intentions

might be, he had no power, in despite of the crown and the parliament, to pay the Romish priests out of the Consolidated Fund, or to place the Roman Catholic laity on a footing of political equality with Protestants. Year by year motions were accordingly made to repeal the laws which bore oppressively upon the Romanists, and one by one the strictly penal statutes either fell into disuse or were swept away. At the period of which I am now writing, there remained only a single enactment which, requiring the affirmation of a particular oath, hindered Romanist peers and commoners from sitting and voting in either House of Parliament, and from holding certain offices under the crown. This enactment was spoken of as a disqualifying law, and strenuous efforts were made to get rid of it. They failed for a time, majorities in both Houses declaring against the repeal. But on each successive division the majorities in the Commons became less decided, till in the end the opponents of what was called Catholic Emancipation found themselves in a minority. The hope of the Protestant party was thenceforth fixed on the House of Lords, and it did not disappoint them; though even there public opinion showed symptoms of wavering, which grew more and more manifest as sons succeeded to their fathers, and new names were added to the list of the peerage.

It is not necessary to pursue this subject further. Through many years the battle of Catholic Emancipation raged, bringing into play, on both sides, traits of character, on which no thoughtful politician now looks back except with sorrow. With these, however, we have no special concern; at all events till the proper time come for explaining how the Duke of Wellington dealt with the question, and upon what grounds of reason his policy rested.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE DUKE AND MR. STEPHENSON—THE DUKE AT ST. PETERSBURG

AMONG other peculiarities incident to the duke's strongly-marked character, there was one which occasioned from time to time a good deal of anxiety to his friends. He seemed to claim an exemption from the ordinary physical infirmities of human nature. Sickness, for example, no matter in what cause originating, he regarded as something which ought to be concealed. It was a sign of weakness of which he was ashamed, and which he would scarcely acknowledge even to the medical men who attended him. In 1823, when on a visit to the Marquis of Hertford, he was attacked with inflammation, which gave way only to profuse bleeding, and left great weakness behind. He could not deny the fact that he had been ill—but he scouted the idea that there was the slightest danger, or that any serious inconvenience had occurred through his illness to himself or to others. In 1824, cholera, not in a very mild form, attacked him, and its effects were long seen in his wasted frame and emaciated countenance. He never would allow that he had suffered from more than a slight derangement of the stomach. Wind, rain, hail, snow, could not keep him back from the discharge of the commonest ceremonial duties. He would appear at guard mountings or reviews in the full-dress costume of the season, whatever it might be; while all around him were cloaked and wrapped up against the weather.[1] Hence they who wrote or spoke to him about some malady under which it was known that he had been labouring, never got a more explicit acknowledgment than this,—"I was a little out of sorts, but I'm all right now;" or, "I tried to bully a cold, but it beat me."

And here it may not be out of place to make mention of a circumstance, which not only illustrates the fact of which I am speaking, but brings prominently into view both the kindness of the duke's nature, and his shrinking aversion from the very

[1] It is fair to add, that the duke wore, on such occasions, an ample encasement of underclothing.

appearance of deceit. He had become partially deaf in one ear, and felt impatient under the affliction. All the legitimate skill and science which London could supply were called in, but without effect. At last, Mr. Stephenson, the celebrated aurist, was recommended to the duke as one who had been eminently successful in similar cases. The duke sent for him. After trying, to no purpose, a less energetic method of treatment, Mr. Stephenson had recourse to his great remedy,—the injection by a syringe into the ear of a strong solution of caustic. "I don't think," the duke used to say, "that I ever suffered so much in my life. It was not pain: it was something far worse. The sense of hearing became so acute, that I wished myself stone deaf. The noise of a carriage passing along the street was like the loudest thunder, and everybody that spoke seemed to be shrieking at the very top of his voice." I am not prepared to assign a reason for this unlooked-for result of an experiment which had succeeded in many other instances; I only know the fact, and that the duke, as was his wont, bore it without manifesting any token that he was uncomfortable. He went out and came in as usual, and when he retired to bed, none of his household suspected that there was anything wrong with him.

By great good fortune Dr. Hume, his friend and family physician, who happened to be in attendance for other reasons, called next morning about eleven o'clock. He was shown into the duke's room, and found him sitting at the table, unshaved and unwashed, with blood-shot eyes and a flushed cheek, and observed that when he rose he staggered like a drunken man. His whole appearance, indeed, to use Dr. Hume's expression, "was that of one who had not yet recovered from a terrible debauch." Now, as Hume knew perfectly well that his illustrious patient never committed such debauches, he became greatly alarmed, and expressed himself so. "I fancy there is something wrong with my ear," was the duke's reply; "I wish you would look at it." Hume did look at it. A furious inflammation was going on, which, had it been permitted to run its course for another hour, must have reached the brain. Hume ordered his patient immediately to bed, and sent off for Sir Henry Halford and Sir Astley Cooper. Vigorous remedies were applied, and the inflammation ceased. But the sense of hearing on that side of the head was destroyed for ever.

I must not omit the sequel to this little tale. The grief and mortification of Mr. Stephenson when he heard of the results of his practice knew no bounds. He hastened to Apsley House,

and being admitted to the duke's presence, expressed himself as any right-minded person, under the circumstances, would have done. But he was instantly stopped, though in the kindest manner,—"Don't say a word about it; you acted for the best; it has been unfortunate, no doubt, for both of us, but you are not at all to blame."

Grateful for this reception, Mr. Stephenson went on to say: "But it will be the ruin of me. Nobody will employ me any more, when they hear that I have been the cause of such suffering and danger to your Grace." "Why should they hear anything about it?" replied the duke; "keep your own counsel, and depend upon it I won't say a word to any one." "Then your Grace will allow me to attend you as usual, which will show them that you have not withdrawn your confidence from me." "No," replied the duke, still kindly but firmly; "I can't do that, for that would be a lie." So strong, even in a case which made no common appeal to his generosity, was the duke's love of truth. He would not act a falsehood any more than he would speak one. Let me not, however, fail to do Mr. Stephenson's memory the same justice which the duke did to his professional character while he lived. "It was not his fault," he used to say. "He distinctly warned me that if I felt any uneasiness in the ear I must get cupped at once; and I said, 'Very well.' But I never was cupped in my life. I never thought more about it, and so, I suppose, the inflammation had time to run on."

The duke underwent this operation because he was in a hurry to set out upon a mission which had been assigned to him. The Emperor Alexander of Russia was dead. He had died under peculiar circumstances,—disgusted with what he believed to be the ingratitude of Europe towards its deliverer, and wrung to the heart by the discovery of an extensive plot for the assassination of himself and of every member of his family. It was the discovery of this plot indeed that led to the postponement of his next brother, Constantine, and the selection of the Grand Duke Nicholas to succeed Alexander on the throne. For Constantine was as universally hated as Nicholas was beloved; and though the conspirators had doomed Nicholas, like the rest of the Romanoffs, to perish, it was believed that they would be less likely or less able to carry their designs into effect with a popular, than with an unpopular, monarch on the throne.

The accession of Nicholas was an event in which the people of England took a deep interest. He was understood to be brave, obstinate, and warlike, and the general impression was

that to conciliate the Russian people as well as to gratify his own tastes, he would plunge into war with Turkey. Now next to the too-great aggrandisement of France, there is nothing which English statesmen have for many years past contemplated with greater apprehension than the advance of Russia towards the west. To uphold the Turkish Empire has thus become a sort of traditionary policy in London, and to the Duke of Wellington was entrusted, in 1825, the delicate task of promoting it. His ostensible business was to congratulate Nicholas on acceding to the throne, his real object to sound the emperor, and if possible to dissuade him from taking up the cause of Greece and making war upon the Turks.

Apart from the Greek question, in which Russia claimed on religious grounds a special right to interfere, there were various causes of quarrel at this time between her and the Ottoman Empire. I need not stop to particularise them now, because I shall be obliged to refer to them by and by, but it may be well to state that each charged the other with breach of faith, and that Russia had gone so far as to withdraw her representative from Constantinople. The two powers accordingly stood towards each other as angry boys stand before they strike; the attitude of Turkey towards Russia being that of the little boy who is not unconscious of his weakness, the attitude of Russia towards Turkey that of the big boy who bullies.

The duke, only partially recovered from the effects of Mr. Stephenson's practice, quitted London in the beginning of February, 1826. He took Berlin on his way, and reaching that city on the 26th, was welcomed by the court, the army, and the people in the most gratifying manner. They gave him, however, little encouragement to hope for a fortunate issue of his undertaking. The Emperor Nicholas was represented to be bent upon war, indeed he was stated to have refused all arbitration unless the allies should offer to interfere in a body, and insist upon the compliance of Turkey with his demands. These were not very satisfactory tidings, but the duke heard, without seeming to take much interest in them, and at the end of a few days continued his journey.

He arrived in St. Petersburg on the 2nd of March, and the same evening had an interview with Count Nesselrode. It was conducted on both sides with some *finesse*, and on the part of the duke with a good deal of reserve. The great object of the Russian minister seemed to be to impress the duke with the belief that the emperor, his master, was not desirous of war;

indeed, he repeated this declaration so often, and, as it sometimes appeared, so gratuitously, that the duke came to the conclusion that M. Nesselrode must have heard of the inquiries which he had been making at Berlin, and was anxious to remove the impression created by the results of these inquiries. Partly because he entertained this suspicion, partly because his own papers were still upon the road, and that he was unwilling to commit himself until they should arrive, and till he should have an opportunity of conversing with others, the duke confined himself to general declarations, that if the emperor were really desirous of avoiding war, he would find the king, his master, ready to do all in his power to help Russia out of her difficulties. Count Nesselrode, on the other hand, expressed his anxiety to be made acquainted at once with the details of whatever plans of accommodation the duke was commissioned to propose. "Such confidence," he observed, "would be of the greatest possible use to him, because it would instruct him what to say to the ministers of the other powers." But the only answer which he could extract from the duke was this: "Tell them the truth; that his Britannic Majesty's government is disposed to do all in their power to enable you to get the better of your difficulties." [1]

On the following day the duke was admitted to his first audience by the Czar. It lasted a long time, and impressed him with a very high opinion of the emperor's disposition and abilities. There was no reserve about him, nor any affectation of it. He declared himself averse to war, but did not see how he could keep out of it with honour. This was not owing, as the English government seemed to imagine, to any mawkish sympathy for the Greeks. They were in rebellion against their legitimate sovereign, and if he were to make their religion an excuse for interfering by force of arms between them and the Porte, he should have no right to complain if the Porte in return were to stir up his own Mahomedan subjects to rebel against him. His ground of difference with Turkey lay nearer home; for not to this day had the Porte fulfilled its engagements to his predecessor. And having exhausted all the resources of diplomacy, there remained for him now no alternative except to send in an ultimatum, and to abide by it.

This language was so different from that which he had been led to expect, and so much at variance with what the Emperor Alexander used to employ, that for a moment the duke felt

[1] The duke's MS. correspondence.

inclined to doubt its sincerity. But he found, on inquiry, that it corresponded exactly with everything which his Majesty had said to the ministers of other powers; he could not, therefore, believe it to be assumed. His first despatch home is, accordingly, written in a cheerful spirit, and contains an expression of his belief that there will be no war in Europe, especially for the sake of Greece. But he had a more difficult game to play in discussing the differences between Russia and Turkey, arising out of the breach or assumed breach of the treaty of Bucharest. A word or two in reference to the nature of that treaty will be necessary in order to give the reader some understanding of the sort of negotiation to which the duke now applied himself.

It had been settled in 1822, at the Congress of Vienna, that the allies should exercise their influence in order to bring the Porte to reason, and prevent a rupture with Russia. The matter to be handled was the fulfilment of a treaty, whereby the Porte had agreed to withdraw its troops from Wallachia and Moldavia; to restore the Hospodars to the principalities, with their own police under them; to rebuild the churches which had been destroyed during the war, and to adjust the affairs of Servia with certain deputies, who were to repair to Constantinople for the purpose. Furthermore, the Porte consented to give free passage into the Black Sea to the merchant ships of all nations; while Russia promised to withdraw from whatever portion of territory she might have occupied, and to renew in form her diplomatic relations with Turkey.

Time passed, and the stipulations of this treaty were on both sides evaded. A fort in Mingrelia, which the Russians had seized, was found so important in keeping open the communications with her army in Mount Caucasus, that she made no move to abandon it; whilst on the side of Turkey no churches were rebuilt, and, as was alleged, at least in St. Petersburg, Turkish troops still occupied the principalities. The fact was, that of 30,000 men whom the Porte had marched into the principalities, a considerable portion was left there, under the designation of police. But as they derived their authority to act not from the Hospodars, but from the Porte, Russia refused to regard them as police; and Wallachians and Moldavians equally complained that they plundered instead of protecting the country.

Not satisfied with this, the Porte had, it appeared, seized the Servian deputies as soon as they arrived in the capital, and placing them under restraint, kept them as hostages for the good behaviour of their countrymen. Against these acts, which she

described as flagrant violations of the treaty of Bucharest, Russia remonstrated, and finding that no attention was paid to her remonstrances, she assumed a higher tone. She demanded that the Porte should send commissioners to Odessa to arrange there the differences between the two courts; and threatened, in the event of a refusal, to withdraw her representative from Constantinople and to take military possession of the principalities.

Convinced from what had passed between the Emperor and himself, that there was little to be apprehended on the side of Greece, the duke went no further than to draw up a paper, in which he showed what the wishes of England were respecting the pacification of that country, and how his government had interfered to defeat Ibrahim Pasha's scheme for depopulating the Morea. The paper was well received by the Czar, who, in his turn, entered largely into his other grounds of quarrel with Turkey, and showed the duke a note which he proposed to transmit to Constantinople, and of which the tone was not only peremptory but menacing. A long and friendly discussion ensued, during which the duke besought the emperor to modify many of his expressions, and above all to omit the demand that Turkish commissioners should be sent to Odessa. For as the Porte never gave its confidence to any foreign representative, it would probably refuse to comply with the emperor's request; and if it did comply, would disavow the acts of its own agents when they returned, and might perhaps put them to death. Nor was this all. The duke entreated the emperor not to rest his case on the terms of the treaty of Bucharest. He had himself violated these terms, and was, therefore, disentitled to appeal to them. Neither was it becoming to threaten, unless he were prepared to follow up his threats with acts of hostility; in which case he would enter at the very commencement of his reign upon an unjust war.

The emperor received these remonstrances in the very best spirit, and frankly admitted that he was not justified in keeping possession of the fort in Mingrelia. He added that the threat of withdrawing his *chargé d'affaires* did not necessarily imply a determination to go to war, which, on the contrary, he would do everything in his power to avoid. When reminded that it was neither wise nor dignified to threaten, unless there was a purpose of carrying the threat into execution, he retorted with great quickness upon England and her proceedings. "What was she then doing? Had she not threatened the Porte, if it

should refuse to prohibit Ibrahim Pasha from carrying his projects into effect in the Morea. What was there more unbecoming in the threats of Russia than in those of England, both powers being determined, by their own showing, to avoid a collision." The duke found little difficulty in proving that the two cases had no affinity; that the object of England was to defeat a particular design which a mere threat of naval interference on her part must accomplish; whereas Russia gave the Porte but a single month to perform certain specified acts, in the event of her failing to do which Russia must either go farther or stultify herself. Besides, no other European power would blame England for preventing such an outrage as that with which the Morea was threatened; whereas all must look with disfavour upon a war between Russia and Turkey, and upon the inevitable aggrandisement of the former at the expense of the latter. The emperor admitted that there was a difference, but repeated what he had already said, that he expected to gain his ends without having recourse to violence; that the Porte was not open to any other argument than that of menace; and that England might depend upon it, that even if forced into war, he should not extend his frontier one inch beyond its present limits.

Here was another point carried. A war between Russia and Turkey alarmed the rest of Europe, only so far as it might tend to bring Russia more towards the west. It was a great matter to obtain this assurance from the czar, that he aimed at no conquests from Turkey, and would not retain them if they were achieved. At the same time, the emperor observed that the Turks had no business in Europe, and that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to head a crusade for the purpose of driving them back into Asia. As however the other powers would not agree to this, he was not only willing but desirous of living on good terms with them.

Encouraged by all this, the duke proposed that the emperor should not send his note at present, but withhold it till there should be time for communicating with the English Government, and for the English Government to remonstrate, through its minister, with the Porte. The emperor objected, on the plea that the season was passing away, and that if compelled to move his troops at all he must move them shortly. At the same time he repeated over and over again that he entertained no views of conquest, and that he should content himself with occupying and holding the principalities, as a material guarantee

for the fulfilment of the engagements into which Turkey had entered.

I should lengthen out unnecessarily this portion of my narrative, were I to give in detail the substance of each successive conference as it occurred, sometimes between the duke and Count Nesselrode, sometimes between the duke and the czar. Enough is done when I state, that for a while the duke's arguments seemed to carry all before them; that the demand for Turkish plenipotentiaries to repair to Odessa was withdrawn, and that six weeks instead of a month were allowed to Turkey to make arrangements for satisfying Russia in other respects. In bringing all this about, the duke made happy use of the emperor's admission respecting the Greeks, by showing that if Russia went to war with Turkey before Greece was pacified, Greece must as a matter of necessity become the ally of Russia; and that Russia could not, at the termination of the war, replace Greece in any shape under her old masters. But just as matters had reached this point, Count Lieven arrived from England; and whether through his influence or not, first Count Nesselrode, and by and by the emperor, a good deal modified his tone. For example, the emperor had agreed to send an ambassador to Constantinople, whenever the Porte should assure England that she was prepared to fulfil her engagements. Counts Lieven and Nesselrode endeavoured to back out of this concession; and declined to reduce to writing the promise which the emperor had given, "that even in the event of war he would retain none of his conquests." It appeared also that they had worked upon their master in the same direction; for when the duke repeated the request that his Imperial Majesty would enable him to furnish the British Government with tangible proof of his generous intentions, the emperor refused to sign anything, unless the duke would pledge England, first to obtain for Russia the redress which she required, and next to exact from the Porte pecuniary indemnification for the expenses of a war, should war arise.

Perceiving that this was not the moment to argue the point further, the duke reverted to the Greek question, which he proposed to settle on the terms originally suggested by the Greeks themselves. These implied the entire evacuation of Greece by the Turks. Indeed there was a clause in the draft of the treaty, which provided for the purchase by Greece at a valuation of the property of all Turks then resident within her limits. When these arrangements should be complete, the duke expressed his

opinion that the execution of them should be placed under the joint guarantee of Russia, Austria, France, and Prussia, each of whom had a more immediate interest in the maintenance of the new order of things than England. Meanwhile he would not hear of any interference on the part of Russia with Ibrahim Pasha.[1] That must be left to England alone, who could deal with Ibrahim as she had done with Algiers, provoking no quarrel with the Porte or with anybody else. Whereas the interference of Russia would be regarded as an espousal of the cause of the Greeks, and a war between her and the Porte must inevitably follow.

So matters rested for a while; but on the 21st of March the duke considered it necessary to return to the subject of the czar's note, and to his own anxious wish that it should be withheld, till the English Government had time to communicate with Sir Stratford Canning. He was greatly surprised when Count Nesselrode informed him that the note was already sent off. A man less discreet would have fired up at such an announcement; for undoubtedly the proceeding, had it taken place, would have indicated no desire on the emperor's part to treat England, or her representative, with too much courtesy. But the duke kept his temper, partly because he suspected that Count Nesselrode had gone beyond the truth, partly because in any case no good could arise from an altercation with that minister. It was a wise determination, and in due time its policy, not less than its wisdom, became manifest; for at a subsequent interview the emperor assured him that the note was still in his own possession, and that he would do nothing regarding it which might occasion annoyance to one whom he respected and esteemed as he did the Duke of Wellington. Nor was this all. The emperor agreed to endorse the conditions which the duke proposed for the pacification of Greece, and on the 4th of April a paper was signed by Count Nesselrode to that effect. By the deed in question, England was authorised to mediate between Turkey and Greece. If the terms of accommodation were accepted, then England and Russia pledged themselves to seek no accession of territory or influence in carrying them into effect. If they were rejected, then the two powers undertook to find some other means of settling the question, subject to the same rule of abnegation in the matter of territory or influence for themselves.

[1] Ibrahim Pasha had proposed to transplant the Greeks to Upper Egypt and to re-people Greece from the Delta.

The duke had gained much: undoubtedly more than ever he expected himself to gain, or than any other diplomatist would have been able to accomplish. He felt his way further, but soon discovered that it was useless. The czar did not conceal that, come what might, he had designs in Asia which he was determined not to forego; and the duke considered it unwise, after such an avowal, to irritate by seeking to thwart him. Enough was done in obtaining from him a written declaration that he would not endeavour to extend his frontier in Europe. In Asia he considered himself free to follow his own course, and the duke would not take advantage of a word hastily spoken, in the hope of thereby restraining him. But the duke gained more than all this. He obtained the emperor's sanction to write at length to Sir Stratford Canning, and to explain that Russia had no intention of going to war with Turkey; and that the Divan was therefore free to consider the propositions which England might make on the subject of the pacification of Greece, with all the calmness and regard for self-respect which the importance of the subject required.

This was the last piece of business which the duke transacted at St. Petersburg, but it was not the last wise and conciliatory proceeding to which he lent himself. In his parting interview with the czar, which occurred on the 5th of April, he learned that the emperor was desirous of showing every mark of respect to his brother Constantine, and that it would be gratifying to him if the duke would go round by Warsaw, so as to visit the archduke. He cheerfully acceded to the emperor's wish, and was the guest of the Grand Duke Constantine for portions of three days. A strong impression appears to have been made upon him by all that he saw and heard. Of the Princess Lowitz, the grand duke's wife, he spoke as of a very charming woman, the object of whose life it seemed to be to keep the imperial family in concord. The grand duke himself was not quite so pleasing. He exhibited signs of dissatisfaction with the state to which circumstances had reduced him, and seemed impatient to escape from it. It was clear, indeed, that the emperor, if he desired to remain on good terms with his brother, must, for some time at least, humour him in many things, and above all, regulate, as far as might be possible, his foreign policy so as to meet Constantine's wishes. Still the duke quitted the Russian dominions more and more satisfied that, if England managed her foreign policy with ordinary discretion, there would be no war.

There was a story current at the time, which I have since heard repeated, that at their parting interview the emperor assured the duke, that out of the love which his Majesty bore him, he would never, unless driven to it by the sternest necessity, wage war with the Porte. I do not vouch for the truth of this tale, but it is a fact, and a remarkable one, that the future policy of Nicholas—whether he came under this direct obligation or not, was strictly in keeping with its tenor. The war between Russia and Turkey, which occurred a few months later, was not of his seeking. It was forced upon him, partly through the blunders of England, partly through the obstinacy of the Porte; and it was not pushed to an extremity. But scarcely was the duke removed from the stage of life, ere the old views of the court of St. Petersburg revived. Prince Menschikoff's mission to Constantinople took place, and the campaign of the Crimea, and the fall of Sebastopol, with all the evils attending them, soon followed.

CHAPTER XXXIII

DEATH OF THE DUKE OF YORK—THE DUKE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF—DEATH OF LORD LIVERPOOL—MR. CANNING PRIME MINISTER

I HAVE gone much into detail while describing the duke's mission to St. Petersburg, partly because the story is probably new to most of my readers, partly because it introduces the duke himself to our notice as a skilful negotiator, having delicate affairs to settle and very many diplomatists with whom to deal. Into other points of history I shall enter very briefly. It was at this time that the death of Don John VI. separated the empire of Brazil from the kingdom of Portugal. The new emperor, Don Pedro, preferring the crown of Brazil, made over that of Portugal to his daughter, and granted a constitution which was unfavourably looked upon by Spain, now under the sway of an absolute sovereign. There arose out of this much ill blood between the two countries. Preparations were made in Spain to invade Portugal, and to give the crown, without a constitution, to Don Miguel, the uncle of the young queen; and 5000 British troops were suddenly despatched to Lisbon for the purpose of repelling the invasion.

The duke was a consenting party to this arrangement, upon the clear ground that neither Spain, nor any other foreign power, had the smallest right to interfere in the internal affairs of Portugal. He acted on the occasion as he afterwards did when Don Miguel succeeded in seizing the Portuguese crown; the principle of non-intervention being with him a reality just as operative in the one case as the other. But circumstances, as I have already shown, had by this time forced him into the front rank of the cabinet, and home politics became in consequence, quite as much as foreign, the subject of his care. They were in a most unsatisfactory state. A year or two of false prosperity, the result, as was alleged, of a liberalised tariff, had ended in the panic of 1825, and monetary embarrassment brought with it, as it always does, discontent with other matters. An outcry was raised against the corn laws. They had been

modified once already, and now Mr. Canning and his friends insisted upon modifying them still further. The condition of Ireland likewise, and the demands of the Roman Catholics, occasioned much uneasiness, and Lord John Russell was manifestly gaining ground in his advocacy of parliamentary reform. To much tampering with the corn laws, the duke was conscientiously opposed. He regarded them as a great bulwark of the aristocratic element in the constitution, which was not in his opinion too strong. On the subject of parliamentary reform, he was prepared to go further than either Mr. Canning or Mr. Huskisson, but objected entirely to the sweeping measures which Lord John Russell brought forward. Ireland however and the Roman Catholic question constituted his great difficulty. He voted indeed with that section of the cabinet which resisted emancipation; yet his opinions on the abstract merits of the case seem to have agreed, neither with theirs, nor with the views of their opponents. He could not bring himself to believe with Lord Eldon that the exclusion of Roman Catholics from political power formed the keystone of the British constitution. He was unable to assent to Mr. Canning's argument that Roman Catholics were subjected by such exclusion to personal, or even to social, injustice. The laws excluding them from parliament operated as other laws do which place more or less of restraint on individuals or on classes. They had been passed with a view to the public good, and till it could be shown that the public good would be more advanced by their repeal than by their retention, he saw no reason, on the ground of abstract right, for interfering with them. But he saw at the same time, that till the question should be settled one way or another, there could be no freedom of action, either to the government or to the legislature. There rested also upon his mind a painful conviction, that if matters long continued as they were, Ireland would break out into rebellion; for which, indeed, the bulk of its population were ripe, and from which they were kept back, only by the prudence, perhaps by the timidity, of Mr. O'Connell and the subordinate leaders in the movement.

It was to this subject, therefore, more than to any other of public interest, that the duke at this time directed his attention; and he already began to express himself concerning it to those who enjoyed the largest share of his confidence, with a reserve which grew day by day less guarded.

The duke was absent from England when the dissolution of

1826 took place. He saw nothing, therefore, of the turmoil and bustle of the general election. But he found, on his return, that in its results it more than justified the worst fears which he had previously entertained respecting the state of feeling throughout the country. In Great Britain, not less than in Ireland, the point most keenly discussed between candidates and electors, had been Catholic emancipation. In Ireland the Romanists carried all before them. Priests went about from parish to parish, canvassing as priests only can do; while pastoral letters, from bishops, charged the faithful to vote as the interests of holy Church and their religion required. In England and Scotland, on the other hand, a strong Protestant spirit had been roused; and a pledge to resist the demands of the Catholic Association was in many places required as the one great test of fitness for a seat in the legislature. Hence the temper of the House of Commons, which met in November, was a good deal changed from that of the previous May. From Ireland the cause of emancipation had achieved a large accession of strength, which, however, was more than counterbalanced by the exclusion of many members, who as representatives of English and Scotch constituencies had formerly voted for that measure.

Things were in this state when the Duke of York died. There could be but one opinion in England in regard to the individual whom it would become the crown to select as his successor at the head of the army, and the Duke of Wellington became, as was fitting, commander-in-chief.[1] But a seat in the cabinet being then considered incompatible with high military office, he was further entreated to remain at the head of the Board of Ordnance. Though far from hopeful that an administration so ill-assorted could long hold together, he would not, by withdrawing from it, precipitate the event of its fall. That, however, which probably no care on his part could have long deferred, an occurrence, as melancholy as it was unlooked for, hurried forward.

The Duke of York died on the 5th of December, 1826. His funeral was attended by most of the cabinet ministers, including, among others, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Liverpool, and Mr. Canning. On the 14th of February Lord Liverpool went up with an address of condolence from the House of Lords to the king, and on the 16th was smitten with paralysis, from

[1] He was at the same time appointed colonel of the Grenadier regiment of Foot Guards.

As the ship laboured in the gale the unprofitable cargo was thrown overboard. Terence Daniel relieved of his crozier went back to his place among the troopers; Creagh was accepted in his place, and taken into confidence and into Shan's household; all was done to deserve favour in earth and heaven, but all was useless. The pope sat silent, or muttering his anathemas with bated breath; the Guises had too much work on hand at home to heed the Irish wolf, whom the English having in vain attempted to trap or poison, were driving to bay with more lawful weapons.

Success or failure however was alike to the doomed garrison of Derry. The black death came back among them after a brief respite, and to the reeking vapour of the charnel-house it was indifferent whether its victims returned in triumph from a stricken field, or were cooped within their walls by hordes of savage enemies. By the middle of March there were left out of 1100 men but 300 available to fight. Reinforcements had been raised at Liverpool, but they were countermanded when on the point of sailing: it was thought idle to send them to inevitable death. The English council was discussing the propriety of removing the colony to the Bann, when accident finished the work which the plague had begun, and spared them the trouble of deliberation. The huts and sheds round the monastery had been huddled together for the convenience of fortification. At the end of April, probably after a drying east wind, a fire broke out in a blacksmith's forge, which spread irresistibly through the entire range of buildings. The flames at last reached the powder magazine; thirty men were blown in pieces by the explosion; and the rest paralysed by this last addition to their misfortunes made no more effort to extinguish the conflagration. St. Loo, with all that remained of that ill-fated party, watched from their provision boats in the river the utter destruction of the settlement which had begun so happily, and then sailed drearily away to find a refuge in Knockfergus.

Such was the fate of the first effort for the building of Londonderry; and below its later glories, as so often happens in this world, lay the bones of many a hundred gallant men who lost their lives in laying its foundations. Elizabeth, who in the immediate pressure of calamity resumed at once her nobler nature, "perceiving the misfortune not to come of treason but of God's ordinance, bore it well;" "she was willing to do that which should be wanting to repair the loss;" [1] and Cecil was able

[1] Cecil to Leicester, May, 1567: *Irish MSS. Rolls House.*

ountry with the least possible delay. He had formed no settled lan. He knew at last the full magnitude of his sister's guilt, or though he had not seen her letters to Bothwell, he had received n accurate description of the worst of them; yet he was deter- nined to do his best for her, and, at the same time, to prevent is friends from breaking with England. It was necessary for im to pass again through London. Elizabeth sent for him, and poke to him in a style which, had he been capable of resent- nent, might have tempted him to reconsider his intentions. He vas obliged to tell her that his country had claims upon him, rior either to his sister's or her own.[1]

He had again a long conversation with de Silva, and spoke nore openly to him than he had cared to do to the queen. De Silva expressed a hope that something might be done with his ister short of dethronement—something like that which had been proposed by Maitland, and accompanied with proper ecurities against further mischief from her. Murray required no pressing. Could Bothwell be caught and hanged, he thought uch an arrangement not entirely out of the question, and both he and his friends would not, if they could help it, offend Eliza- beth. De Silva, who understood thoroughly the entire truth, carcely offered to advise under circumstances so extraordinary. Murray, however, he said might do what no one else could do. The lords would trust him as their friend, and the queen as her brother. Murray answered that as de Silva had spoken so reasonably, he would be entirely frank with him. The difficulty of an arrangement had been infinitely increased by the discovery of the queen's letters to Bothwell. They had revealed (and he related the substance of one of them) the most profound and horrible treachery. She had brought dishonour upon his father's house, and had made her restoration all but impossible. Her life, however, he had good hopes that he could save.[2]

He impressed de Silva with the very highest opinion of his character, and he impressed no less favourably such of Eliza- beth's ministers as spoke with him. Sir Walter Mildmay, with whom he spent a night on his way down to Scotland, found him

serve, God willing, to repair towards Dieppe again, where a messenger attends my arrival to give knowledge to my Lord of Murray at the court, whereby he may under assurance of this vessel determine and adventure his purpose."—Thomas Jenyr to Cecil, July 13: *MSS. France.*

[1] "Notwithstanding so many practices, the Earl of Murray will con- tinue a good Scotsman. The hard speeches used by her majesty to him hath somewhat drawn him from the affection he was of to this realm."—Bedford to Cecil, August 10: *Border MSS.*

[2] De Silva to Philip, August 2: *MSS. Simancas.*

"very wise and still very well affected to the maintenance of friendship between the two realms;" "content to forget his own particular griefs," and shrinking only from the responsibilities which were waiting for him.[1]

Bedford, whom he saw at Berwick, found him "neither over pitiful nor over cruel;" inclined, at all events, to prevent the queen from being put to death, but refusing to commit himself further—much, in fact, in Bedford's own humour, and such as Bedford wholly approved.[2]

Meantime events in Scotland had been moving with accelerating speed. Each post which came in from England brought fiercer threats from Elizabeth, which all the warnings of her council could not prevent her from sending. It might have been almost supposed that with refined ingenuity she was choosing the means most likely to bring about the catastrophe which she most affected to dread.[3]

The letters from Edinburgh were all to the same purpose, that the louder Elizabeth menaced the more obstinate became the

[1] Sir Walter Mildmay to Cecil, August 4: *Domestic MSS. Rolls House.*

[2] Bedford had formed a strong opinion as to the impolicy of Elizabeth's attitude. She had herself written to explain her views to him. "Although," she said, "apparent arguments may be made that the neglecting of that queen's estate in this her captivity, by supporting of the others, might tend greatly to our particular profit and surety—yet finding the same not agreeable to our princely honour, nor the satisfaction of our conscience, we cannot agree to certain demands made to us for the contrary, whereof we have thought good to let you understand our meaning."—Elizabeth to the Earl of Bedford, July 20.

Bedford, commenting to Cecil on this letter, says: "Those that serve must be directed always, though oftentimes it be to their great grief to put in execution all that they be commanded. I am sorry to see that her majesty is no better affected to the lords in Scotland. How much it shall stand us in stead to embrace their gentle offers and good wills, will one day appear."—Bedford to Cecil, July 25 and August 1: *Border MSS.*

Sir Walter Mildmay, writing also to Cecil on the same subject, says: "The matters in Scotland are come to a far other conclusion than as I perceived by your first was looked for here; but surely to none other than was like to follow, the case itself and the proceedings considered. A marvellous tragedy, if a man repeat it from the beginning, showing the issue of such as live not in the fear of God."—Mildmay to Cecil, August 4: *Domestic MSS.*

To Mildmay also it seemed false wisdom to attempt to arrest or change the natural retribution for crime.

[3] "Her majesty remains in her first opinion; we have shown her that if the lords are left out of hope of her majesty, it will not only be a means of the greatest extremity to that queen, but also a perpetual loss of those which neither she, nor hers, are like to recover again. It is showed her further, that the thing which she would fainest should not come to pass of all other things is by this her manner of dealing most likely to be brought to pass the sooner against her. She answers still she will not comfort subjects against their prince."—Leicester to Throgmorton, July 22 *Conway MSS.*

friends of his own. The duke not only gave up his seat in the cabinet with the Master-Generalship of the Ordnance, but resigned, at the same time, the command of the army. This last was a measure for which no one was prepared. Under ordinary circumstances it might have laid him open to the charge of disrespect towards the sovereign. But he was not afraid, as matters then stood, of incurring even that reproach. His resignation afforded the strongest possible proof, that from the minister of the day his confidence was entirely withdrawn; and that the differences between them were more than political, —that they touched the point of private and personal honour. And so, when accounting for the step in the House of Lords, he explained them.

CHAPTER XXXIV

THE DUKE IN OPPOSITION—DEATH OF MR. CANNING—THE DUKE A POLITICAL LEADER—THE GOVERNMENT—ITS DIFFICULTIES

I HAVE arrived at a stage of English history so recent of date, and in which the part played by the Duke of Wellington is so generally known, that I can venture to pass lightly over most of the important events which marked its progress.

The duke, taking his seat on the opposition benches of the House of Lords, became the acknowledged head of a great political party. He modified, and in so doing defeated, the ministerial Corn Bill after a rather curious correspondence with Mr. Huskisson. This was a severe blow to Mr. Canning, who counted on no such result, and still hoped, by conciliating, to win back the friends of his youth. Forced now into the arms of the Whigs, they likewise deserted him in his hour of need. On a motion affecting the representation of Penryn he found himself in a minority of 69, and abandoned for ever all hope of playing to a successful issue the game on which he had entered. Indeed he never held up his head again. Soon after the prorogation of parliament, which occurred on the 2nd of July, he retired to the Duke of Devonshire's house at Chiswick; and there, on the 8th of August, in the same chamber in which Fox had breathed his last, he died.

Mr. Canning was succeeded as First Lord of the Treasury by Mr. Robinson, who went to the House of Lords by the title of Viscount Goderich. It was the season of the recess, which the new ministers spent chiefly in quarrelling among themselves, while the leaders of the opposition went about from place to place seeking to make a favourable impression on the constituencies. Among others the duke paid a series of visits in the North of England, which though ostensibly those of private friendship, were by others rather than by himself converted into political demonstrations. He was feasted by Dr. Van Mildert, Bishop of Durham, with princely splendour in the old hall of Auckland Castle. He was the guest of Lord Ravensworth, at Ravensworth, and dined with

the Mayor and Corporation of Sunderland in their court house. Gentlemen who sat down with him to table hung upon his words and cheered him loudly, and ladies, as their custom was, courted and flattered him wherever he appeared. The case was somewhat different with the mob. They, too, crowded to look upon him, but their greeting was cold. Had he come among them fresh from his triumphs in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, they would have greeted him as heartily as their betters. But he was now a politician, and a party politician, advocating, or being supposed to advocate, opinions of which they disapproved. Nor were there wanting those among the educated classes, Sir Walter Scott being of the number, who felt that he had stooped to become what they saw him, and lamented the circumstance. Not so the duke. He was never more in earnest in his life, than while striving to set up a government which should do what he conceived to be its duty to the crown and to the people; and in order to secure that end, he was ready to sacrifice, not popularity alone, but everything that was personally dear to him. The duke returned from his tour satisfied that what he called the intelligence of the country was with him, and before parliament met again he found himself at the head of affairs.

Lord Goderich's ill-assorted cabinet fell to pieces after the battle of Navarino. The king sent for the duke, and not without difficulty prevailed upon him to undertake the task of forming a new administration. He would have willingly declined that honour had any legitimate means of escape been open to him; but it was not consistent with his principle of duty to refuse obedience to what amounted to a command on the part of the sovereign. The manner in which he accomplished the task offended, as much as it surprised, men of extreme opinions on both sides of the House. While Lord Goderich was in office, the duke had consented to resume the command of the army. He now offered to Lord Goderich himself, and to the Canningites of the old cabinet, seats in the new; and filled up the vacancies occasioned by the exclusion of the Whigs, by bringing in Mr. Peel and others of his own friends. It was an arrangement dictated by an honest desire of securing for the public service the largest attainable amount of talent combined with moderation. Yet the government so constituted carried within itself the seeds of failure. Mr. Huskisson and the duke never drew very cordially together. It is a mistake to assume that the one was all for progress, the other for obstruction. On fiscal

questions the duke was disposed to go as far as Mr. Huskisson, bating only his strong predilection in favour of the corn laws. On points affecting the representation of the people he was desirous to go farther. They differed, however, in their views of what members of the same cabinet owed to one another, and that difference parted them. Words spoken by Mr. Huskisson on the hustings, whither after joining the duke's government he went for re-election, brought them first into collision, and that collision doubtless paved the way for the more serious misunderstanding which took place not long afterwards.

We now know that public opinion had by this time received a more decided bias towards liberalism than the duke or the majority of his colleagues supposed. The Test and Corporation Acts had long been complained of; by many sound churchmen as prostituting the most sacred symbols of their faith, by dissenters as affixing to them a stigma which was intolerable. Neither party seemed to be satisfied with the annual bill of indemnity, though to all intents and purposes it set the law aside. And now Lord John Russell, on the 28th of February, 1828, proposed that the House of Commons should resolve itself into a committee with a view to inquire and report upon the whole subject. The government opposed the motion. Mr. Huskisson and Lord Palmerston both spoke against it. But the feeling of the House could not be misunderstood, and in order to avoid the appearance of defeat, the ministers withdrew before the question was put. A bill founded on the resolution was brought into the House, which the government adopted as its own, and adding to it, in the Lords, two not unimportant clauses, carried it through. Thus the Test and Corporation Acts were repealed. The clauses added in the House of Lords were highly conservative. One required each nonconformist member, before he took his seat, to swear that he would not use his influence as a legislator to the damage of the Established Church in her rights or property. The other obliged him to assent to certain specified opinions, "on the true faith of a Christian."

This defeat, for a defeat it virtually was, damaged the government not a little. The government received a still heavier blow three months later, by the secession from its ranks of Mr. Huskisson, Lord Dudley, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Charles Grant. Undoubtedly Mr. Huskisson was the first, and therefore the most to blame, in this gratuitous quarrel. After overruling the duke and Mr. Peel in the cabinet, on a question affect-

ing the disfranchisement of Penryn, Mr. Huskisson, when the question came on in the House of Commons, suddenly rose, and spoke against the very conclusion which he had constrained his leader to adopt. And this somewhat extraordinary proceeding he followed up by writing immediately afterwards to the duke in these words: "I owe it to you as the head of the administration, and to Mr. Peel as the leader of the House of Commons, to lose no time in affording you an opportunity of placing my office in other hands." The duke had a perfect right to read this letter as he did. It was a tender of resignation by the writer, neither more nor less; yet looking to the condition of the government at the moment, and still more to the state of feeling out of doors, it would be difficult to say that the duke exercised a wise prudence in accepting the resignation without a remonstrance. I say nothing against the strict fairness of the duke's conduct; that cannot be disputed. Nor is there anything to show that other causes of distrust may not have operated to restrain him from listening to the explanations which Mr. Huskisson was subsequently anxious to offer. But considering how weak he was in the House of Commons, and how little able to supply the talent thus lost to his administration, it is not, I think, going too far to say, that the duke, in breaking with Mr. Huskisson and his friends upon a point which came at last to be little more than one of etiquette, made a greater sacrifice than a more practised politician would have done, to that high sense of honour which formed part of his nature.

Before this schism took place, the government had succeeded in preparing a new Corn Bill, with a scale of duties rising and falling according to the average price of grain in the home markets. The bill never became popular, and the success of the ministers in carrying it did them no good. Neither were their hands strengthened by the course which the duke considered it his duty to take with reference to Portugal. Another revolution had given the crown of that kingdom to Don Miguel, and Don Pedro was preparing by force of arms to expel his brother and establish his infant daughter on the throne. This was one of those cases in which, according to the duke's view, no foreign nation had a right to interfere. His predecessor had broken off diplomatic relations with the usurper, and the duke took time to consider when and how it would be expedient to renew them. But he refused to extend the protection of England to Donna Maria, and as far as the law would allow put the Foreign Enlistment Act in force against the armaments

"Jus gentium" as well as precedent, there might perhaps be for the essentials of this proceeding. The doctrine of the responsibility of princes to their subjects had been preached thirty years before by Reginald Pole, when the Catholics were at issue with Henry VIII.; but kings and queens, when they had committed crimes, had been brought to justice so far by the wild method of assassination, and the establishment of a formal court in which a prince regnant could be indicted, was a new feature in European history. The messenger chosen to carry to Lochleven the intimation of the council's intentions was the rugged Lindsay, the man of few words, who would have fought Bothwell at Carberry, and whom Mary Stuart had sworn to hang. Ruthven went with him, son of the hard earl who had been the first to seize Ritzio in her cabinet, and Robert Melville the diplomatist. These three represented the three parties into which the lords were divided. Lindsay was the mouthpiece of the fiery zealots of the assembly; Ruthven belonged to the more moderate faction of Morton and Mar; while Melville, as the secret agent of Maitland and Throgmorton, carried a note from the latter concealed in the scabbard of his sword, advising Mary to comply with any demand which should be presented to her, and assuring her that no act which she might do under such compulsion could prejudice her rights.

Short time was allowed her for reflection. The same morning on which the council communicated their purpose to the English minister, Lindsay repaired to Lochleven. Persuasion was to be tried first, and Melville was admitted alone to the queen's presence. He found her still unbroken—at times desponding, at times, "speaking as stout words as ever she did."[1] Having an unexpected opportunity of speaking privately to her, he gave her Throgmorton's message, and added another directly from Elizabeth, with which he had been charged also, if he was able to give it; that "at all times she might count upon a sure friend in the Queen of England."

These fatal words—the prime cause of Elizabeth's long troubles in after years—"were no small comfort to her in her grief."[2] She said she would rather be in England under Elizabeth's protection, "than obliged to any prince in Christendom." Her proud blood boiled at the indignities which were thrust upon her, and in her first passion she fought fiercely against all that Melville could urge. But his arguments, coupled with

[1] Bedford to Cecil, August 10: *Border MSS.*
[2] Sir R. Melville to Elizabeth, July 29: *MSS. Scotland.*

But there was the most perfect organisation for either passive or active resistance to constituted authority of which history makes mention. And all avowedly directed to one end,—the repeal of the laws disqualifying Roman Catholics from sitting in both Houses of Parliament, and from exercising elsewhere the same political rights which were exercised by their Protestant fellow-subjects.

For years the struggle had gone on, till at last a bold measure suggested by Mr. O'Connell was tried with complete success. After proclaiming to the world that there was no statute in existence which disabled a Roman Catholic from sitting in the House of Commons, he avowed his intention of standing for the representation of the county of Clare, which the acceptance, by Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald, of the presidency of the Board of Control, had rendered vacant. His cause was at once taken up by the whole body of Roman Catholics in Ireland. All the old ties which bound landlord and tenant together were broken; every altar in the land, from the Hill of Howth to Cape Clear, became, as Mr. Shiel well expressed it, a tribune. The progress of the agitator to the hustings was a triumph, and after a brief trial of his own weakness, Mr. Vesey Fitzgerald withdrew from the contest.

The results of the Clare election took all parties by surprise. It filled the Roman Catholics and their supporters in Parliament with delight. It stirred a feeling of anger and scorn among their opponents. The duke saw that matters were brought by it to a crisis. To go on as former administrations had done, discussing the Catholic question from year to year, and throwing out in the Lords bills passed by the Commons, was no longer possible. He must, therefore, choose between two courses, both difficult, and even dangerous, though not, as it appeared to him, in the same degree.

The government, if it should determine, under existing circumstances, to maintain the statutes excluding Roman Catholics from power, must ask for new laws, the old having quite broken down. They must bring in a bill, requiring candidates for seats in Parliament to take at the hustings the oaths of supremacy and allegiance; otherwise they could not prevent Roman Catholics from contesting every vacant county and borough in the United Kingdom, and from becoming *ipso facto* members of parliament, should constituencies see fit to elect them. Practically speaking, there might be small risk that either in England or Scotland this result would follow, at

least to any extent. But what was to be expected in Ireland? That every constituency, with the exception, perhaps, of the university and city of Dublin, and of the counties and boroughs of the north, would, whenever the opportunity offered, return Roman Catholics; and that, the members so returned being prevented from taking their seats, three-fourths at least of the Irish people must remain permanently unrepresented in parliament. Was it probable, looking to the state of parties in the House of Commons, that such a measure, if proposed, could be carried? For many years back the majorities in favour of repeal had gone on increasing session after session. Even the present parliament, elected as it had been under a strong Protestant pressure, had swerved from its faithfulness. The small majority which threw out Lord John Russell's bill in 1827, had been converted in 1828 into a minority; and among those who voted on that occasion with Mr. Peel, many gave him warning that hereafter they should consider themselves free to follow a different course.

But perhaps it might be possible to get a bill passed to disfranchise the Irish forty-shilling freeholders, a class of voters who, as they had been created for acknowledged purposes of corruption in the Irish Parliament, would have nobody to stand up for them in high places, now that they refused to play their patron's game. This was quite as improbable an issue as the other. The disfranchisement of the forty-shilling freeholders had indeed been talked of in former years: but if effected at all, it was to be in connection with a measure of Catholic emancipation. To propose it now for the avowed purpose of rendering Catholic emancipation impossible would be to insure the rejection of the bill. That plan, therefore, fell at once to the ground. And there remained but two others.

The minister might ask parliament for power to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, and to place all Ireland under military law. To ask for less would be ridiculous; because the act against unlawful assemblies had failed, and on account of its helplessness was suffered to expire. Now would parliament grant such extensive powers to any government, merely that the government might be enabled to debar his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects a little longer from enjoying equal political privileges with Protestants? The issue was very doubtful,—perhaps it was not doubtful at all; parliament would never grant such powers. But assuming that the powers were given, what must follow? A general insurrection, to be put down

after much bloodshed and suffering, and then a return to that state of sullen discontent which would render Ireland, ten times more than she had ever been, a mill-stone round the neck of Great Britain. And by and by, when military law ceased, and the same measure of personal liberty was granted to Irish men which the natives of England and Scotland enjoyed, a renewal of agitation, only in a more hostile spirit, and the necessity of either reverting again and again to measures of coercion, or of yielding at last, what, upon every principle of humanity and common sense, ought not to have been thus far withheld. But the minister, if the existing parliament refused to give the powers which he asked, might dissolve, and go to the country with a strong Protestant cry; and this cry might serve his purpose in England and Scotland. Doubtless; but what would occur in Ireland? The return of Roman Catholic members in the proportion of four to one over Protestants, and the virtual disfranchisement thereby of four-fifths of the Irish people. Would Ireland submit quietly to any law carried against herself, in a House of Commons so constituted? Was it not much more probable, that a dissolution would only lead to the same results which had been shown to be inevitable in the event of the existing parliament acquiescing in the minister's views? And was there not, at all events, a chance that the electors, even of England and Scotland, might refuse to abet a policy so pregnant with danger to themselves and to the commonwealth?

But why move at all? Mr. O'Connell had been elected by the priests and rabble of Clare to represent them in parliament. Let him retain his empty honour, or better still, let him be summoned by a call of the House to the bar; and on his refusal to take the oaths, issue a new writ, and go to a new election. In the first place, Mr. O'Connell could not be forced to attend to a call of the House, such call being obligatory only on members chosen at a general election; and in the next, if he did attend, what then? As soon as the new writ was issued, he would take the field again as a candidate, and again be elected, and so the game would continue to be played, till a dissolution occurred, when all those consequences of which we have elsewhere spoken would inevitably come to pass.[1]

[1] The substance of a paper in the duke's handwriting, as yet unpublished.

CHAPTER XXXV

THE CATHOLIC QUESTION—DUEL WITH LORD WINCHELSEA

I MUST refer the reader who is curious in such matters to the larger edition of this work, for a detailed account of the process by which the duke prepared his own mind and the minds of others for the course of policy which his judgment directed him to follow. He opened his plan, and the reasons on which it was founded, elaborately to the king, before submitting it to his colleagues, or taking counsel with others than Mr. Peel and Lord Lyndhurst. He found his Majesty very little disposed to yield to so stern a necessity—indeed, the king more than hinted at a dissolution on a Protestant cry, and the certainty of securing thereby a parliament which would settle the question very differently. Something, too, was said at the palace and elsewhere, of Protestant clubs, and of the influence to be exercised by them over public opinion. But to political clubs of every kind the duke entertained a well-grounded aversion; and from the thought of civil war, which must inevitably follow such a course as the king suggested, he turned with abhorrence. The result was that the king consented to the consideration of the duke's plan in cabinet—the substance of which it is necessary to explain, and for the explanation of which a few words will suffice.

The duke's plan embraced eight separate points.

1. He provided for throwing open to Roman Catholics, all, except certain specified offices under the crown, on condition of their taking certain oaths, as prescribed for others of his Majesty's subjects.

2. He proposed to suspend, for one year, or during the current session of parliament, the acts requiring members of the united parliament of Great Britain and Ireland to take the oath of supremacy, and subscribe a declaration against the doctrine of transubstantiation.

3. He limited the right of voting in Ireland to freeholders who should pay to the parish, barony, or county cess, or to the whole of them, five pounds sterling or upwards per annum.

4. He stipulated for the means (£300,000 a year) of taking the Roman Catholic clergy into the pay of the state.

5. He required that the Roman Catholic clergy should receive licences from the crown, countersigned by a secretary of state, or from the lord-lieutenant, countersigned by the chief secretary, without which it should not be lawful for them to perform any clerical function in Ireland.

7. He declared that persons officiating without such licence should be deemed guilty of misdemeanour and punished: for the first offence by fine; for the second by fine and imprisonment; for the third by being sent out of his Majesty's dominions.

8. He settled that no convent or monastery, or establishment of regular clergy, or of Jesuits, should, except by his Majesty's licence, be formed within the realm.

There was great boldness, as well as originality, in this scheme; at a final settlement of which the duke did not arrive without consultation with men better read than himself in the canon law, and in the customs of the universal Church. As long as points purely political stood to be considered, the duke was a safe guide for himself; and in case he might distrust his own judgment he had the Lord Chancellor and other eminent constitutional lawyers to consult. In matters directly or indirectly affecting the spiritual rights of the Church of Rome, he was compelled to seek for information elsewhere, and he found it. And here, without undervaluing the assistance rendered by others, I must be permitted to particularise one correspondent, to whom the duke made frequent references, and from whom he never failed to receive the clearest and most satisfactory answers. Dr. Philpotts, then Dean of Chester, and Rector of Great Stanhope, seems to have mastered the whole subject. To every question proposed by the duke, he replied by referring to admitted precedents, now in the authoritative works of Romish jurisprudents, now in the acts, by Concordat or otherwise, of continental sovereigns; and the result was such an accumulation of evidence as left the duke no reason to distrust the course of legislation on which he proposed to enter. Submitted, in the first instance, to Mr. Peel and Lord Lyndhurst, and subsequently to the heads of the Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of London, Durham, Winchester, Lincoln, Chester, and Oxford, this scheme underwent severe criticism, and many alterations. Mr. Peel objected to the raising of the franchise in Ireland, and to the payment of the Irish Roman Catholic priests. The prelates declared that

they would never consent to such payment, but were indifferent about everything else. And when other members of the cabinet came to be consulted, still further difficulties presented themselves. The consequence was, that all the most valuable arrangements in the duke's bill were struck out; and that nothing was left in the form of security for the rights of the Church, except an oath, which, though taken in the letter, has never been in substance observed, and which is liable at any moment, when the humour of parliament shall so run, to be abolished altogether.

It is proverbially difficult in private life to keep a secret which has been communicated to more than two persons. It seems impossible to prevent, in public life, the oozing out of matters which are discussed between sovereigns and their ministers, provided the matters themselves are looked at from different points of view. George IV. had king's friends apart from his constitutional advisers, and the inferior members of the duke's administration were not all as reticent as their superiors. Mr. George Dawson, one of the Lords of the Treasury, made a speech at Derry, which cost him his place for the moment, but fell like a thunderbolt upon Ireland. Palace gossip complained that the king was coerced by his too-powerful minister, and England and Scotland were agitated with the fear of coming evils. It was at this juncture, in December, 1828, that Dr. Curtis, formerly head of one of the colleges in Salamanca, but then the Titular Roman Catholic Primate in Ireland, wrote to the duke, and extracted a reply which, with entire disregard of propriety and honour, he hastened to make public. Then came an imprudent communication from Lord Anglesey to the Catholic Associations, then a proposal from Mr. Peel—not now for the first time made—to resign; and finally such an appeal to the patriotism of his colleague by the duke, as Mr. Peel found it impossible to resist. The results are well known. The king, after a vain attempt to form an administration hostile to the Roman Catholic claims, placed himself, with undisguised reluctance, in the hands of his cabinet; and on the 4th of February, 1829, the House of Commons was requested in the speech from the throne, first to put down the Catholic Association, and then to consider whether the disabilities under which his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects laboured could be removed "consistently with the full and permanent security of our establishment in church and state, with the maintenance of the reformed religion established by law, of the rights and

privileges of the bishops and of the clergy of this nation, and of the churches committed to their charge."

How this announcement was received, and what consequences followed,—how the king made one effort more to keep the laws as they were, and failed,—these are points of history which all who desire may investigate for themselves. So are the details of the duke's duel with Lord Winchelsea, one of the great champions of Protestantism in and out of the House of Lords. Lord Winchelsea had taken an active part in October, 1828, at a public meeting on Penenden Heath, to protest against Catholic emancipation and to pledge the English people to resist it to the death. He was a subscriber, also, to King's College in London, towards the building of which the duke had been a contributor, for the avowed purpose of strengthening the Established Church in the metropolis. He now withdrew his name from the list of supporters, accompanying that act with a letter to the *Standard* newspaper in which he violently assailed the duke's private character. This was carrying political hostility further than the duke could allow. He obtained from Lord Winchelsea an acknowledgment that the article had been written by him, and then, in a letter, mildly though firmly expressed, requested that the charge in the newspaper should be withdrawn and apologised for. Lord Winchelsea declined to retract and to apologise, and the matter being referred to friends, a hostile meeting was agreed upon. It is a curious feature in this somewhat unfortunate occurrence, that, when the moment for action arrived, it was found that the duke did not possess a pair of duelling pistols. Considering the length of time which he had spent in the army, and the habits of military society towards the close of last century, that fact bore incontestable evidence to the conciliatory temper and great discretion of the duke. Sir Henry Hardinge, therefore, who acted as the duke's friend, was forced to look for pistols elsewhere; and borrowed them at last, he himself being as unprovided as his principal, from Dr. Hume, the medical man who accompanied them to the ground.

The details of this remarkable duel are well known. The combatants met in Battersea Fields, now converted into Battersea Park,—the duke attended by Sir Henry Hardinge, Lord Winchelsea by the Earl of Falmouth,—and Lord Winchelsea, having received the duke's fire, discharged his pistol in the air. A written explanation was then produced by Lord Winchelsea's second, which the duke declined to receive unless the term

" apology " were introduced into it, and the point being yielded, they separated, as they had met, with cold civility. Long after the events themselves had ceased to occupy public attention, the writer of this history took advantage of the duke's great kindness to refer to them in one of those confidential conversations with which he was occasionally honoured. The duke's opinion respecting the propriety, indeed the necessity, of the course which he followed, on the occasion, had undergone no change. " You speak as a moralist," he observed, smiling, " and I assure you that I am no advocate of duelling under ordinary circumstances; but my difference with Lord Winchelsea, considering the cause in which it originated, and the critical position of affairs at the moment, can scarcely be regarded as a private quarrel. He refused to me, being the king's minister, what every man in or out of office may fairly claim,—the right to change his views under a change of circumstances on a great public question. He did his best to establish the principle that a man in my situation must be a traitor, unless he adhere through thick and thin to a policy once advocated. His attack upon me was part of a plan to render the conduct of public affairs impossible to the king's servants. I did my best to make him understand the nature of his mistake, and showed him how he might escape from it. He rejected my advice, and there remained for me only one means of extorting from him an acknowledgment that he was wrong."

" But he behaved well on the ground, at all events; he refused to fire at you."

" Certainly he did not fire at me; and seeing that such was his intention, I turned my pistol aside, and fired wide of him; but that did not make amends for the outrageous charge brought against me in his letter. It was only the admission that the charge was outrageous which at all atoned for that; and it would have been more creditable to him had he made it when first requested to do so, than at last. He behaved, however, with great coolness, and was, and I am sure continues to be, very sorry that he allowed his temper to run away with him."

CHAPTER XXXVI

DEATH OF GEORGE IV.—STATE OF PARTIES—REVOLUTION IN FRANCE—GENERAL ELECTION—DEATH OF MR. HUSKISSON—THE DUKE RESIGNS

The passing of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill broke up the Tory party. All who opposed the measure went into opposition, and in both Houses might by and by be seen sitting and voting together, peers and members of parliament who never before took the same view of any one political question. An immense impulse was thereby given to the cause of parliamentary reform, and the duke, who had been quite ready in the case of East Retford to transfer members from a small to a large town, became alarmed at the urgency with which more sweeping propositions were brought forward. There was no struggle during the remainder of the session of 1829. The opposition had not yet consolidated itself, and the government was cautious. But with 1830 began a strife which ended in the greatest bloodless revolution which the world has ever witnessed.

It was the duke's custom during the recess to divide his time between Strathfieldsaye and Walmer Castle, to the wardenship of which, on the death of Lord Liverpool, the king had appointed him. He paid occasional visits also to his friends, and one of these, anxious if possible to bring about a reconciliation between him and the Canningites, invited Mr. Huskisson to meet the duke at his house. Nothing came of the arrangement. Mr. Huskisson made no direct advances to the duke nor the duke to him, and they parted, as it seemed, on terms, neither friendly nor the reverse. Mr. Huskisson, however, appears to have taken ill the reserve with which he was treated. He had been moderate hitherto, though not friendly, in his place in parliament. He took an early opportunity in 1830 of going into violent opposition.

The state of Portugal, and the war between Russia and the Porte, ending in the treaty of Adrianople, gave the duke a good deal of trouble. He made his way through these difficulties, however, by temper and moderation, and on the 4th of February,

1830, met parliament again. His majorities, not for some time great, began to fall off, and in several trials of minor importance he sustained a check. Meanwhile Mr. O'Connell returned to his old trade in Ireland, agitating for a repeal of the union. In Birmingham, likewise, an uncomfortable spirit began to show itself, and the Political Union, the parent of many similar societies which afterwards sprang up both in England and Scotland, came into existence. Then came repeated motions for parliamentary reform, on one of which, introduced by Lord John Russell, the ministerial majority was barely forty-eight. It was the first muttering of the storm which was ere long to burst and carry all before it.

And here let me once more observe that the duke was neither blind nor indifferent to the abuses which had crept into the constitution. He had a theory of his own concerning nomination boroughs, that they were the mainstay of Imperial, as distinguished from merely British government. But he always spoke with bitterness of the grasping ambition of individuals, who, whether peers or commoners, strove to accumulate them in their own hands. "They are blind," he used to say, "to their own interests, which cannot be separated from those of the state. They do not see that they are perverting to the worst purposes an institution which ought to have been rendered subservient to the best. Instead of leaving these boroughs so distributed, that men of all shades of political opinion, and representing all the great interests of the empire, may, if they possess but talent and character, find their way through them into the House of Commons, they go into the market, and purchase up one after another, with no other end in view than to provide for their own dependents, and promote their own objects. Over and over again it has been pressed upon me to become the proprietor of a borough; but I would have nothing to say to the proposal—I would not dirty my fingers with so vile a job."

The session wore on unsatisfactorily to all parties. A government, too feeble to attempt great measures, confronted an opposition scarcely prepared to turn them out; and trifling losses and trifling gains marked the progress of the parliamentary campaign on both sides. At last it came out that the health of George IV. was failing, and on the 26th of June, 1830, he expired. The duke had not a high opinion of the king's moral qualities. His Majesty's intellectual powers might have been above the average had they received proper cultivation.

But even in that respect he fell beneath what his station required, and was often difficult to manage. Yet his death at this crisis of affairs, both at home and abroad, was felt by the duke and his friends to be a misfortune. An early dissolution became inevitable, and the signs of the times gave small encouragement to anticipate that from a general election the government would gain strength.

On the 23rd of July the dissolution took place. On the 27th of the same month the French revolution broke out, and on the 30th the elder branch of the House of Bourbon was again in exile. It was impossible but that scenes enacted in a country so near as France should make their influence felt in England. The resistance to the ordinances of Charles X. had been preceded in Normandy and elsewhere by a succession of incendiary fires. In the autumn of 1830, machine-breaking and incendiarism became rife in England, and everywhere an outcry was raised that the duke was plotting to deprive the nation of its liberties. A general election, carried on during such an excitement as this, could have only one result. Before the Houses met, the most sanguine of their supporters gave up all hope of commanding in the new House of Commons a majority for ministers.

Indifferent so far as he was himself concerned, as to what might happen, yet thoughtful to the last of the interests of the country, the duke did not lose a single day in recognising the new government which the French had set up. He wrote, also, to the other great powers, urging them to follow his example, and if he failed to succeed with the whole of them, he at all events divided them, and so prevented the occurrence of war. Of the revolt of Belgium from Holland, which almost immediately followed, he was less tolerant. He did not believe that the Belgians had been oppressed by their king, and he was reluctant to see the state which he had been mainly instrumental in establishing, destroyed upon false pretences. But before time was given to mature a specific line of action, events befell, which relieved him on that, and on other equally important heads, from further responsibility.

William IV. ascended the throne, happy in the prestige which always attends novelty, and still more so in a character for straightforwardness, which contrasted favourably with what men believed of his predecessor. He went about showing himself everywhere, and achieved immense popularity, especially among the poorer classes. Meanwhile the duke, occupied as he

was, found time in the autumn of this year to take part in a melancholy pageant. The first railway ever used for passenger traffic, that which George Stephenson laid down between Liverpool and Manchester, was about to be opened, and the directors besought the duke to honour the enterprise with his presence. They who are too young to remember the dawn of what is now a great system, would find it difficult to conceive the amount of interest which was excited by that event. At every table, and nowhere more frequently than at the table of the duke, men reasoned upon the probable chances of success or failure, and when the duke himself quitted Walmer, for the purpose of making a personal trial of what was then a mystery, not a few of the guests, whom he left behind, thought with apprehension of the risks to which he was going to expose himself.

They proved little hazardous to him, because he attended rigidly to the instructions which he received. To another great statesman, less observant of the rules of discipline, they were fatal. Mr. Huskisson unfortunately quitted his carriage when the train stopped to take in a supply of water; and losing his presence of mind, while attempting to re-enter it, fell back across the rail, and was killed. The duke, who saw the accident, —he was indeed the first to go to the assistance of the wounded man,—seems to have been overwhelmed with grief. He described it, on his return to Walmer, as one of the saddest events which, in the course of a career not strange to heart-rending incidents, he had ever witnessed; indeed, there is some reason to believe that the memories associated with this, his first essay, were not without their effect in strengthening, if they did not create, that disinclination to railway travelling which adhered to him ever after. Be this as it may, the fact remains, that in spite of the success which attended the Liverpool and Manchester line, the duke never could be persuaded, directly or indirectly, to countenance the extension of the system in other quarters. When it was proposed, not long afterwards, to connect Southampton with London by rail, he gave to the project all the opposition in his power; and, more characteristic still, he continued in all his journeys to travel post, till the impossibility of finding horses along the deserted high-roads of Kent and Hampshire compelled him to abandon the practice.

The autumn passed away amid incendiarism in the rural districts, and agitation and discontent in the great towns; and on the 26th of October parliament met. It soon became evident to the most devoted of their supporters that the ministers had

gained nothing from the dissolution. A majority of the English counties, all the large and many of the smaller boroughs, had declared against them; and in Ireland opposition was rampant. Scotland, however, stood by them; and they carried, chiefly by the votes of the Scotch members, both the election of the speaker, and the address in answer to the king's speech. But there their triumphs ended. Lord Grey, in an able but violent speech, having impugned all their measures, as well foreign as domestic, demanded a large measure of parliamentary reform, and was answered by the duke in terms which, to say the least, were more frank than the occasion required. It seemed, indeed, as if he were anxious to bring the question between himself and his political opponents to an issue. Premising a statement of his general views in an argument too curt, perhaps too subtle, to carry with it much weight, he concluded thus: "I cannot say that I am prepared to bring forward any measure of this nature; but I will at once declare that, as far as I am concerned, as long as I hold any situation in the government of this country, I shall always feel it my duty to resist such measures when proposed by others."

Had the duke's early years been spent in the British House of Commons, instead of in the command of armies, and the management of foreign governments, he would have avoided any such ill-timed and peremptory announcement. There was no specific motion before parliament which it had become his duty to consider; neither was a question put to him, as it had been put two years before, pointedly, to Mr. Canning. His declaration against reform was therefore gratuitous, and to a certain extent defiant. Now it seldom happens that in free assemblies a tone of defiance is a wise tone; and it becomes especially unwise if the body addressed be dissatisfied, reasonably or unreasonably, with the speaker. No doubt the duke's argument, taken as a whole, agreed with the interpretation which he subsequently put upon it. It neither pledged, nor was intended to pledge, him against all change. But it fell upon the ears of men who could listen to no statement from him, except in anger, and who gave to it the interpretation which best suited their own purposes. A more wary politician would have avoided a mistake which was as unfortunate to himself as to the country. Unpopular before, he became tenfold more unpopular now, and his speech, commented upon by newspapers and stump orators, spread the contagion into every corner of the empire.

His final blunder of all, for a blunder it undoubtedly was, arose out of that horror of bloodshed, except when some great occasion required, which was constitutional to him. It had been settled that William IV. should dine with the Lord Mayor on the 9th of November. All the preparations were complete, and the public had been informed of what was about to take place, when a note from the Lord Mayor elect announced that a plot to assassinate the king and the duke on the way to the Mansion House, had been discovered. The cabinet met, and came to the conclusion that the royal visit must be postponed, and the fact of the postponement was made public next day through the newspapers. A furious outburst of political indignation followed. The duke had done it all. By his arbitrary proceedings he had so disgusted the people, that it was no longer safe for the king to pass through his own capital. The funds fell; trade grew stagnant; more than one speculator became bankrupt. No mercy was shown to the government in either House of Parliament by the enemy; their friends, either overawed, or from sheer lack of ability, failed to support them as they ought to have done. The duke listened calmly to the abuse which in the House of Lords was heaped upon him. He did not so much as condescend to reply to it; but he felt, as did his colleagues, that public opinion was against him, and he made up his mind to embrace the first convenient opportunity of retiring from office.

The opportunity thus sought for was not slow in presenting itself. A combination of Tories with Whigs and Ultra-Liberals had already decided on the overthrow of the administration, which it was resolved to effect by placing them in a minority on the bringing up of the civil list. Beyond this, however, the Tories appear never to have looked. They had no plans formed, no arrangements made for constructing a new administration. In themselves, indeed, they were too weak to grasp at power, and it does not appear that they had so much as opened a negotiation for sharing with their new allies the spoils of office. One master passion ruled them wholly,—they yearned to be avenged on the man whom they had taught themselves to regard as a political traitor; and in order to appease that longing, they gave themselves up to play the game of a party whose traditions were all antagonistic to their own, and from whom they did not so much as pretend to expect any mercy.

On the 12th of November, the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward his scheme for the civil list, fixing the amount

to be settled on the crown at £970,000. Several of the details in his project were objected to; and on the 15th, when he asked for his vote, Sir Henry Parnell proposed, and Sir Edward Knatchbull seconded a motion, that the accounts should be submitted to a select committee to be examined. Now this course, though unusual, was not entirely unprecedented. The ministers, without any loss of dignity, might have assented to it, but they had determined to stand or fall on this question, rather than enter, with untried strength, on the still more formidable contest with which they were threatened. For Mr. Brougham's notice of motion for leave to bring in a Parliamentary Reform Bill lay on the table; and whatever the nature of his scheme might be, they shrank from opposing it till they should have succeeded in beating their enemies in a fair stand-up fight on some less critical point. The battle was accordingly fought on the civil-list question, and it ended unfavourably for the government; ministers were defeated in a full house, by a majority of twenty-nine.

The blow was struck, and none recoiled from it more immediately than the section of angry Tories, who were mainly instrumental in delivering it. They had achieved their purpose, and stood aghast; for no time was lost with the duke in placing his resignation in the hands of the king; and on the 16th the Lords were informed by him, the Commons by Mr., now Sir Robert, Peel, that ministers held office only till their successors should be appointed.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE REFORM BILL—DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT—THE DUKE'S WINDOWS BROKEN—THE BILL THROWN OUT IN THE LORDS—RIOTS IN LONDON—THE DUKE'S LIFE THREATENED AT DEAL

It is perhaps natural that a minister retiring from office in times of strong excitement should take very gloomy views of the state of those public affairs which he had not himself been permitted to guide. To the duke, now nothing more than a peer of parliament, visions of the darkest hue were continually present. He saw the political unions in England and Scotland acquiring from day to day more perfect organisation and a wider influence. In Ireland, Mr. O'Connell appeared to be raised above the control of law, for Lord Grey's government, though it obtained a verdict of sedition against him, shrank from inflicting the penalty. All this seemed to the duke's excited imagination to indicate that the new cabinet was prepared to go to the utmost lengths, in order to conciliate the democracy; on which, indeed, and on which alone, he conceived that it would be driven in the end to rely. Nor were the prospects which met him while contemplating the condition of the continent, and the probable line to be taken by England in dealing with foreign powers, more satisfactory. He had gone down to Walmer immediately on surrendering the seals of office, and he remained there during the brief recess which followed. A small circle of intimate friends were with him, and his conversation throughout was more grave and subdued than on any previous occasion I remember it to have been. "I don't see how these men are to carry on the government," he used to say, "so as to maintain order at home or peace abroad. It's very well for Lord Grey to talk about standing out for reform, retrenchment, and non-intervention. Reform, as he calls it, he may or may not get; retrenchment I'll defy him to carry farther than we have done, unless he sacrifice the great institutions of the country; and as to non-intervention—with all the sympathies of his party enlisted on the side of democracy, that

is in his case impossible. Mark my words; you'll see the Belgian insurrection taken up, and a French army in the Netherlands before many months are over; and then, if Austria, Russia, and Prussia move, what is to save Europe from a renewal of scenes which no man who has once taken part in them would ever desire to witness again?"

"But they are acting vigorously in the matter of the rural disturbances, at all events, and Mr. Stanley seems determined to stop the agitator's career in Ireland."

"They are doing in the rural districts the work which we had begun, and handed over to them; but what do you say to their intimacy with the political unions? Do you think they will be able to lay the storm which they have raised in Birmingham, Leeds, and Glasgow; or prevent it from sweeping away all the safeguards of the constitution? As to O'Connell, depend upon it that whatever Mr. Stanley may wish to do, Mr. Stanley's masters have other uses to make of the great O, than to gag him."

Parliament met after the recess in February, 1831, and that struggle immediately began which ended, more than a year afterwards, in the passing of the Reform Bill. To the bill in question the duke, as is well known, offered at every stage all the resistance in his power. He regarded it as the first great step in a course of policy which, whether designedly or not, must destroy the constitution; and he wrote and spoke about it as men are apt to do about a terrible calamity when it is impending. Had he been in a position, before the bill was introduced, to advise with the authority, which at a later period was conceded to him, the House of Commons would have refused to consider it at all. Had the old Tory party, when the second reading came on, been capable of holding the balance even between their convictions and their passions, the House would have rejected it then. But the ministers had made their arrangements with such prudent secrecy, that when first offered to the legislature, it took all parties by suprise; while the debate on the second reading showed, that among such as were offended with it, there were many who preferred it to the thought of bringing back the duke and his friends to power. Hence ministers succeeded in affirming the principle of their measure by a narrow majority of nine. And when the House in committee began to cavil at details they at once dissolved. How all this was brought about, with what violence of language in-doors and out; how the political unions and the newspapers supported

the ministers, and the multitude shouted for the bill, the whole bill, and nothing but the bill, these are matters which have long since passed into history. It is not, therefore, my purpose to give any detailed account of them here, but rather to confine myself, as closely as I can, to the influence which they exercised over the duke's personal proceedings, and the position in which they left him when the storm blew over.

The duke was not in his place in the House of Lords on that memorable day when the king went down to dissolve parliament. He had been in attendance for some time previously at the sick bed of the duchess, and she expired just as the park guns began to fire. He was, therefore, ignorant of the state into which London had fallen, till a surging crowd swept up from Westminster to Piccadilly, shouting, and yelling, and offering violence to all whom they suspected of being anti-reformers. By and by volleys of stones came crashing through the windows at Apsley House, breaking them to pieces and doing injury to more than one valuable picture in the gallery. The duke bore the outrage as well as he could, but determined never to run a similar risk again. He guarded his windows, as soon as quiet was restored, with iron shutters, and left them there to the day of his death, a standing memento of a nation's ingratitude.

The violence of the mob, and the apparent complicity of the government in its proceedings, put an end at once to the hesitation of the old Tories. Mortifying it might be to find themselves again under the leadership of one whom they had so recently expelled from office. But the evil, though serious, was less than that with which they seemed to be threatened. A majority of them, therefore, besought him once more to place himself at their head. The members of his own party generally stood by him, and not a few outsiders, public men who had formerly been Whigs, private persons who had never before taken any part in politics, proffered to him their allegiance, and undertook to work for him. Encouraged by an appearance of what he called a return to reason, the duke in the teeth of such a majority as had never before supported a government in the House of Commons, determined to resist the progress of the bill. He fought for delay, hoping, and indeed persuading himself, that if time only could be gained, such a reaction might occur in the country, as would enable him to take the measure out of the hands which now directed it, and deliver it from some of its most objectionable features. Standing up, however, as

he did, for constitutional government, he refused to fight even that battle except on constitutional grounds. Being invited by Lord Wharncliffe, before the writs for the new parliament were issued, to meet a body of conservative peers and consult with them as to the course to be pursued, he declined to take part in the proceeding. "The peers," he wrote, "have been dissolved as a House of Parliament, and if they meet as invited, they will meet as peers without his Majesty's authority, and contrary to his inclination, to discuss his last act in relation to themselves. This, in the duke's opinion, would have been a measure neither becoming nor judicious. In like manner, while he counselled his friends in the House of Commons to resist the measure clause by clause, and to protract the struggle to the utmost, he prepared the Lords for throwing out the bill when it came to them; and this they accordingly did on the second reading, by a majority of forty. Parliament was thereupon prorogued, and there followed, both in town and country, such a series of outrages as cannot now be spoken of except with shame. The burning of the Castle of Nottingham, and the sack of Bristol, were but specimens of what mobs will do when excited to violence by appeals to their passions, and set free, as they imagine, from the restraints of law.

I am not aware that on this occasion the duke suffered any personal indignity. He quitted London immediately on the prorogation, and spent, if I recollect right, a few days at Hatfield. But the business of the Cinque Ports required his presence at Walmer, and he gave notice of the day and hour of his coming. Now Deal, poor as it was, had caught the infatuation of the hour, and as I lived in the neighbourhood of Deal at that time, and happened to be in the commission of the peace for the county of Kent, more came to my knowledge of what my neighbours were doing than might otherwise have reached me. One evening, after dusk, a person, wrapped in a seaman's great-coat, was ushered into my study. I knew him, for he was a character in his way. During the French war he had played the part of a spy, while carrying on with the connivance of government a smuggling trade with the opposite coast; and he now lived, though not in affluence, upon his savings. He was the bearer that evening of information which I certainly did not credit, but which it was my duty to convey to the duke, and which I conveyed to him accordingly. A plot, it was said, had been concocted in one of the low public-houses for attacking the duke's carriage when it should arrive at a lonely part of

the road between Sandwich and the Deal turnpike. The answer which I received by return of post was very characteristic. Information of this plot had been communicated to the duke from Dover also. For his own part, he always distrusted the stories of spies, who were apt either to invent tales to suit their own purposes, or to be active in getting up the plots which they afterwards betrayed. He had written to the Mayor of Dover, and informed him that duty required his presence at Walmer, and to Walmer he had determined to go. It was the business of the government and of the magistrates to protect the king's subjects, particularly when travelling on his Majesty's service. He should, however, instead of setting out at ten o'clock, as he had intended, leave London at six on the following morning, and he suspected that they who molested him on the road, would come second best out of the collision, if a collision should occur.

All this was good as far as it went, but several gentlemen in the neighbourhood conceived, as well as myself, that the duke's life was too precious to be exposed to the smallest risk. Next morning, therefore, I rode to meet him, which I did between the villages of Wingham and Ash, when he begged me to come into his carriage while his servant rode my horse. At Sandwich we changed horses, and soon after passing through the town, overtook eight well-mounted men of Kent, who immediately broke into two parties, four riding about one hundred yards in front of the carriage, while the others followed. They all carried heavy hunting whips, and were besides armed with pistols, as I found were likewise the duke himself and his servant. But no enemy appeared. The carriage swept up to the old castle gate, and the voluntary escort, having seen the duke safe, dispersed without attracting attention.

Probably at no period of his life was the duke engaged in a more voluminous correspondence than during the months which intervened between the prorogation and the re-assembling of the present parliament. Not content with sitting down to his desk as early as six in the morning, I have seen him, when the castle was full of guests, go on with his letter-writing after dinner in the drawing-room, either regardless of the buzz of conversation which passed around him, or else stopping from time to time to take part in it. And yet, cheerful and good-humoured as he was, he could not quite forget that the very men who now turned to him for advice were in many instances those who had driven him out of office. "You see how they

come about me," he once observed; " they were never satisfied till they got rid of me as a minister; and now they want me to put my neck in the halter for them. As if I cared one farthing for their personal influence, or for their boroughs either, except that I know the importance of the latter to the balance of power in the state."

Among the consequences of the agricultural riots of 1829-30 was the re-enrolment, in various parts of England, of corps of yeomanry cavalry; one of which was raised, mainly through the exertions of the Earl of Winchelsea, in East Kent. Lord Winchelsea, when he began to recruit, was one of the warmest supporters of Earl Grey; and, as a matter of course, an equally warm denouncer of the Duke of Wellington and his policy. But times were now changed; and Lord Winchelsea, like many other Tory peers, after vainly striving to become reconciled to the ministerial Reform Bill, had broken off from his Whig connections, and placed himself again under the political guidance of the duke. He invited the duke this autumn to Eastwell Park, where a grand review of his regiment took place; and where the reception awarded to the Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports by upwards of 400 well-mounted and well-armed yeomen, could not fail to be very gratifying to him.

But small triumphs like this were far from compensating to the duke for the graver and more trying disappointments which seemed, day by day, to gather round him. In the House of Commons not one convert could be reckoned upon. Indeed the rejection of the bill by the Lords seemed but to strengthen the determination of the majority to admit of no compromise even if ministers themselves were to propose it. And more distressing than even this, in the duke's estimation, were the symptoms of wavering which began to be exhibited among the Lords themselves. A considerable section of the Upper House, headed by Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby, felt and said that they had done enough, and that in the coming session they must no longer attempt to stop, but be satisfied with accepting and as much as possible modifying the ministerial measure. Now this was entirely opposed to the duke's view of things. He admitted that to avoid a measure, and a large measure, of parliamentary reform was no longer possible; but he contended that it should not be left to Lord Grey's administration to carry that measure, because, in the first place, Lord Grey would never consent to modify his own plan, however slightly, and in the next place, his supporters out of doors would not

allow him to do so, were he ever so much disposed. The duke's argument amounted to this: If you are prepared to accept the bill as it is, pass the second reading when it comes into the House of Lords. If you are not prepared for this, throw the bill out. There will be a little rioting out of doors, as there was before; but that is all. Ministers will resign; a new government will be formed; and a new Reform Bill introduced by that government. It will please the political unions, and the mob, less than Lord Grey's bill, but it will satisfy all reasonable men of all shades of opinion, and by and by the country will settle down to its old pursuits and habits of thinking.

When threatened with another prorogation, to be followed with a creation of peers on such a scale as virtually to extinguish the House of Lords, his answer was, "I don't believe that Lord Grey will recommend, or the King consent, to so violent a proceeding,—at all events till the experiment of a change of government is tried. But if I be mistaken, it is surely better that the House of Lords should suffer this outrage from the government than from us. For if against our consciences we vote for the second reading, we shall do so from intimidation, and the influence which we now exercise over public opinion will be lost. Besides, what will you gain by reading the bill a second time. If Lord Grey be capable of destroying the constitution in order to secure the second reading, do you think he will be more scrupulous if he find himself in danger of being defeated in committee?" It was thus that the duke continued to urge open opposition in the Lords—being convinced of two things, first, that the passing of the bill, as it then stood, would undermine the whole fabric of the constitution; and next, that its rejection would be attended with no evils which a change of government, and a little firmness, as well as concession, could not easily remove.

The voluminous correspondence which the duke carried on with Lord Wharncliffe and others will be found in the larger edition of this work. It had the same object in view throughout, but the object was not attained. Lords Wharncliffe and Harrowby entered into negotiations with Earl Grey. They waited upon him by appointment at Sheen, and failed to obtain a single concession. Strange to say, they still persuaded themselves that when the measure came into committee, his Majesty's ministers would yield collectively much which the chief of the cabinet individually refused. And so believing, and persuading others so to believe, they voted for the second reading,

which, after a debate protracted throughout three nights, was carried by a majority of nine.

The duke felt this parliamentary defeat pretty much as he would have done the loss of a great battle in the field. Grieved and mortified he did not conceal that he was, yet to all outward appearance at least he never lost heart. With Lord Wharncliffe and his friends he declined to continue upon terms of confidence. He consulted them no more upon the course to be pursued in committee, far less gave any countenance to the negotiations which they opened afresh with Earl Grey. Lord Lyndhurst was now, as he had always been, his chief adviser. With his own hand, he drew up the sketch of a new bill, for which he and his friends agreed to contend. The principal features in this modified plan were these, that no borough should return less than two members; that no addition should be made to the number of metropolitan members; and that voters for boroughs should not claim the right of voting for counties also. Into Schedule A it was proposed so far to introduce modifications, that room should be left for the representation of the colonies in parliament. As to keeping knots of boroughs in the hands of individual proprietors, the duke was not prepared to fight such a battle as that. And if after all the thought reverted to his mind, that no new arrangements could serve the monarchy as the old had done, he found comfort in believing that his modifications, if accepted, would render change more gradual, and therefore less dangerous to the great institutions of the country.

The duke sent copies of his proposed amendments to many peers. He wrote about them likewise to some of his friends who were not peers, and I think that the following brief correspondence will better show than any narrative of mine in what channel his thoughts were at the moment running.

"Ash, near Wingham, 1*st May*, 1832.

"My dear Lord Duke,—I have read your grace's letter with profound sorrow, because its tone corresponds but too well with my own previous notions of the existing state of things. Perhaps you will say that I need not trouble you with a letter in order to say this, nor would I, except that it occurs to me that the very projects which you tell me are entertained, must prove eminently mischievous. The Conservative peers may rely upon it, that the period when opposition might have been made to good purpose has passed away. By admitting the bill

to a second reading, they have given up the principle; and matters of detail are not only not worth contending for, but the victories gained will all be productive of evil.

"Supposing that the king does not make peers, what will follow? You must pass the bill in some shape or another. You cannot, by any alterations in committee, render it materially less mischievous than it is. But you will alter it considerably, so considerably as to make it unpalatable to all parties. If passed in its integrity, I am sure that it will, sooner or later, disappoint its advocates; if passed with your mutilations, it will disappoint them also. But in the latter case you will be blamed for evils which are founded, not in your alterations, but in the bill itself.

"Of course your grace knows much better than I what to do; and, were I a peer, I should put myself implicitly into your hands; but my firm persuasion is, that your best policy now is to let the measure go through the third reading as it stands, and so to cast all the odium of its consequences on the shoulders of its authors."

"LONDON, *2nd May*, 1832.

"MY DEAR ——,—I have received your letter of the 1st instant, which affords a good deal of room for reflection. Is it true that we cannot do any good by mending the bill?

"The metropolitan representation is ruin. We may, possibly we shall, get rid of that. The democracy has, by the bill, a positive gain of sixty-four members. We may reduce those members very considerably. We may improve Schedules A and B. We may improve the £10 franchise. All this would be important, if the measure is to be carried into execution.

"You say truly, that it will not give satisfaction. In our state of society nothing will give satisfaction. It would be best to remain as we are; but not being able to remain as we are, I think that we ought not to pay attention to the charges of responsibility for the real improvements, and the principle of conservatism, which we may introduce into the bill.

"I admit that nothing that we can do would make the bill safe. The country will have to pass through a severe crisis; but let us meet that crisis on the best grounds that we can, rather than leave all to chance,—or to what we know is as bad as possible."

The issues of the attempt to take the management of parlia-

mentary reform out of the hands of the government are well known. Lord Grey did exactly as the duke had foretold that he would do; he adjourned parliament as soon as the bill was read a second time. From Lord Wharncliffe he learned that amendments would be proposed in committee, and after the recess made a move as if to conciliate the opposition. He proposed that the cases of condemned boroughs should be considered, not collectively, but one by one, whereupon Lord Lyndhurst moved as an amendment, that before the House proceeded to disfranchise any borough at all, it should determine what and how many new boroughs were to be created. A debate ensued, in which the ministers opposed the resolution, and the votes being taken, they found themselves in a minority of twenty-five.

A meeting of the cabinet followed, when it was determined to go no farther with the bill till the king should have consented to create as many peers as would enable ministers to carry their measure in its integrity. Earl Grey and Lord Chancellor Brougham were deputed to negotiate with the king, who refused to come in to their terms, and the ministers resigned. It was an event for which the Conservative peers were not unprepared. The duke being sent for, assured his Majesty that everything possible would be done to extricate him from his difficulties. He expressed himself willing to go, in the way of change, to the utmost limits of safety, and undertook on his own personal responsibility to maintain order in the country. At the same time he advised the king to place a member of the House of Commons at the head of the new cabinet, and named Mr. Peel. Mr. Peel, as is well known, declined the charge. Mr. Manners Sutton, the Speaker of the House of Commons, was then thought of. But communications from the city and from all parts of the country came in to say, that apart from Mr. Peel, there could be no confidence in any Conservative member of either House as First Lord of the Treasury, except in the duke himself. What could the duke do? If he also refused to serve, how was the authority of the crown to be maintained? and if at such a crisis, through any backwardness on his part, the sovereign should fall into the hands of men who seemed to him to have arrived at a settled determination rather to humble the king, and to destroy the House of Lords, than to modify in any degree their pet measure, how should he ever be able again to hold up his head in society? It was not in the duke's nature to hesitate. He accepted the charge of forming an administration, and day

and night, for a fortnight together, he laboured to bring the work to a successful issue.

It was in the House of Commons that the great obstacle to the accomplishment of his purpose lay. As to the excitement out of doors, the duke treated it with indifference. He held as little formidable both the strong language of the press and the threats of the political unions; and even Lord Milton's refusal to pay taxes, and the advice given to the country at large to follow so bad an example, gave him no serious alarm. Not so the refusal of one after another of the Conservative leaders in the lower house, to share with him the responsibilities of office. Mr. Goulburn and Mr. Herries both held back. Mr. Wynne doubted the possibility of forming a Conservative government at all. Sir George Murray and Sir Henry Hardinge were, indeed, at the duke's disposal, and Mr. Alexander Baring, afterwards Lord Ashburton, gave a reluctant consent to become his Chancellor of the Exchequer. Mr. Manners Sutton also, after a good deal of hesitation, agreed to take office. But except in these and a few instances besides, friends and foes seemed alike determined to stand aloof from him. Sir Robert Inglis, for example, could draw no line of distinction between public and private honour. He was unable, therefore, to see how statesmen who had expressed themselves so strongly against reform, in any shape, could, without a total loss of character, accept office, on the condition of bringing in a Reform Bill. Meanwhile Lord Ebrington proposed, and carried a vote to the effect, that the House of Commons could not repose confidence in any other than the administration which had just been removed from office. And to sum up all, Mr. Baring himself, after he had agreed to accept the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, did not hesitate to say in his place that it would be better for the country that those who had prepared the Reform Bill should carry it into law, and that whatever he might do in opposition to this course, he would do reluctantly.

I have alluded to the state of feeling out of doors. Nervous persons watched it with deep alarm; for mobs are always noisy, and when the functions of government are suspended, they are, up to a certain point, dangerous. The duke was not influenced by it for one moment; yet he received at this time some curious letters, of which the following is a specimen:—

"Birmingham, 13*th May*, 1832.

"My Lord,—I have the honour to inform your lordship,

that as soon as the rumour arrived in this town of your lordship's appointment to be the Prime Minister of William IV., five hundred of us simultaneously bound ourselves by a solemn engagement that we would prevent such an event; and that, if not preventing it, your continuance in office should be of short duration, and *we have no doubt* but our endeavours shall be crowned with success.—We have the honour to be your lordship's humble advisers, by order of the meeting,

"JOHN WM. THOMPSON."

To the same purport, though in a different spirit, a Mr. Anderton wrote, on the 14th, to say that the cry in Birmingham was for a £10 franchise; and that, coerced by a large meeting which had taken place on the previous day, many respectable people had enrolled their names as members of the political union, while others were petitioning for the passing of the ministerial bill, though their own convictions and wishes were against it.

The government had been in abeyance long enough, when, on the 15th of May, the duke waited on the king, and informed his Majesty of what had passed in the House of Commons on the previous evening. He represented at the same time that he no longer entertained the hope of being able to form such an administration as could lead the House of Commons, or be able to conciliate public confidence. He therefore advised his Majesty to recall his former ministers; and when his Majesty, of his own accord, proposed to write to Earl Grey, and to prevail upon him, if he could, to forego the desire for an extension of the peerage, and to introduce such amendments into his bill as might satisfy the more moderate of its opponents, the duke offered no objection to the arrangement. He was not, however, so sanguine as to anticipate any very favourable issue to the endeavour; and he was right. Lord Grey answered the king's letter immediately. He assured his sovereign that he would do what he could, though it would be impossible, after recent events, to deviate from any leading principle of the measure. A few alterations in details might be admitted, but beyond that the government could not go. As to the king's request that the demand for new peers should not be repeated, his lordship took no notice of it. The king was in his hands, and in the hands of the House of Commons, and of the political unions; and his Majesty was made to feel that he must do whatever might be desired of him.

There was but one line of action now open to the duke, and he did not hesitate to enter upon it. The House of Lords must at every hazard be saved, by taking away from the minister the remotest pretext for swamping it with a large creation of new peers. At the interview which led to the re-opening of communications between the king and Earl Grey, the duke assured his Majesty that he would offer no further opposition to the progress of the bill; indeed, that he would cease to attend in his place in parliament till after it should have passed into law. A like pledge was given by Lord Lyndhurst, and his Majesty breathed more freely. But all the duke's difficulties were not yet over. Peer after peer asked to be informed as to the course which he wished them to follow, while many besought him to join with them in remonstrating against the threatened creation of new peerages. To the latter proposal he replied, as he had replied before, that he could be no party to a resolution of the House which, besides amounting to an attack upon the prerogative, would probably bring on the very evil which it was intended to avert. To the former he stated, without reserve, his own intentions, assigning his reasons, but carefully avoiding to advise his friends. Meanwhile, a few of the more excitable of the party expressed strong disapprobation of all that had been done. After defeating the Whigs, he ought, according to their view of the case, to have risked all, even the dangers of a dissolution, rather than suffer the reins of government to pass again into the enemy's hands. Even with such correspondents the duke kept his temper, being satisfied to demonstrate to them the utter helplessness of their schemes, and the impossibility, without great danger to the public peace, of maintaining the state of suspense one day longer than he had done.

On the other hand there were, among his friends, several who, adhering to the opinion that the battle had been lost at the second reading, wrote to congratulate him on having escaped from the situation of peril and difficulty into which his chivalrous sense of duty to the crown had thrown him. One specimen of the manner in which he replied to these communications I subjoin, because it places in a clear light the motives which guided the duke in his management of those delicate affairs, and the view which he took of the inevitable consequences of his failure.

"London, *21st May*, 1832.

"My dear ——,—I have received your note of yesterday, for which I return my best thanks.

"I think that the mistake made by my friends is this. First, in not estimating the extent of the advantage of taking the thing out of the hands of the Radicals,—that is, in reality, of giving the country the benefit of some government. Secondly, in not estimating the farther advantage of diminishing the mischief of the Reform Bill; and particularly that of the Scotch Bill.

"In my opinion the advantage first mentioned more than compensates for all that would have been lost by our having anything to say to the Reform Bill.

"We shall have the Bill in its worst form. In the meantime we have no government. God knows whether this country can have one again without passing through a crisis in its affairs.

"One advantage, however, has resulted from the transactions of the last week. The country perceives that the king is against what is doing."

I need not pursue further the progress of affairs, which have long since become matters of history. After a brief adjournment, to afford time for the reconstruction of the cabinet, parliament again met, and on the 17th of May the duke and Lord Lyndhurst entered into a full explanation of their conduct during the late recess. This done, they quitted the House, and a considerable body of peers following their example, the arena was left clear to the ministers. They took up the Bill at the point where it had been dropped, and carried it, clause by clause, through committee. In due course, after being read for the third time, it received the assent of the Crown, and became law.

The mob had gained their end, and the joy of its members was, or seemed to be, as unbounded as their anxiety had of late been painful. But there was no admixture of generosity in it. Not satisfied with having triumphed over the opposition of the great duke, they followed him with the most rancorous personal hatred, and escaped the everlasting disgrace of dipping their hands in his blood only by a sort of miracle. He took occasion on the 18th of June to visit the Mint, which he did on horseback, attended by a single groom. Some ill-disposed persons recognised him as he was returning, on Tower Hill, and he was instantly surrounded by a crowd, which grew more dense and more furious as he proceeded westward. The duke's countenance underwent no change. He never put his horse out of a walk, and the groom rode after him as calm and self-possessed

as his master. It was in vain that the city police, attracted by the throng, and by the yells and cries which proceeded from it, endeavoured to gather round him; they were pushed aside, and one fellow, seizing the bridle of the duke's horse, endeavoured to dismount him. But the groom, riding up, forced the man back, and a gentleman who was driving a phaeton, placed the carriage with great presence of mind close to the tail of the duke's horse, and so broke the violence of the pressure from behind. Other well-dressed persons likewise came to the assistance of the police, and he was saved from personal outrage. At last they reached the end of Chancery Lane, up which the duke turned, the crowd still following. He proceeded to Lincoln's Inn, to the chambers of the Solicitor to the Treasury, with whom he had business; and where he had appointed the Earl of St. Germans, Lord Granville Somerset, and Lord Francis Conyngham to meet him. But my readers would scarcely thank me were I to describe what followed in other words than those of an actor in the scene. The following is Lord St. Leonard's version of this remarkable story, kindly sent in reply to a communication from myself.

"On the 18th of June our equity courts were not sitting. I was, therefore, in chambers; and as I sat working near the window on the ground-floor, I was startled by three horsemen passing towards Stone Buildings, with a mob at their heels, shouting, hooting, and hissing. I sent my clerk to see what was the matter, and upon his return, finding that the Duke of Wellington was the object of displeasure, I sent the clerk, with some others, round to the men's chambers, to beg them to come at once to protect the duke. I found that the duke, with Lord Granville Somerset and Lord Eliot (the present Earl of St. Germans), had been to the Tower on official business, and were then at the chambers in Stone Buildings of Mr. Maule, the Solicitor to the Treasury, with whom the duke had an appointment. In making my way to Mr. Maule's, I found a considerable mob in Stone Buildings and its approaches, and their conduct was most violent. When I joined the duke, we considered what was the best mode to protecting him and his companions. He would not listen to any mode of retreat by which he might avoid the mob. I assured him that the Lincoln's Inn men would effectually prevent any violence, and he determined to get on horseback again, and to ride through the streets. I then went downstairs, and ordered the small gate, leading to Portugal

Street, to be shut and guarded, so as to prevent the people from getting round that way to interrupt us when we went through the great gates into Carey Street; and I ordered those gates to be shut as soon as the duke should have passed. I addressed a few words to the gentlemen, who had assembled in considerable numbers, and requested them to occupy the stone steps which the duke would have to descend, in order to reach his horse. This they did with great heartiness, and they exhibited, I may say, a fierce determination to defend the duke against all comers. A butcher was bawling lustily against the duke, when a young gentleman, a solicitor, seized him by the collar with one hand, and knocked him down with the other, and the mob seemed rather amused at it. The duke, upon my return upstairs, asked how he was to find his way out of the Inn. I told him that I would walk before him. He would allow no one to hold or to touch his horse whilst he mounted. He was pale, with a severe countenance, and immovable on his saddle, and looked straight before him, and so continued whilst I was with him. Lords Granville Somerset and Eliot rode on each side of him, and of course his groom behind. I walked in front, and shortly a brother barrister came up and asked me if he might walk with me. I gladly accepted his arm, and we moved on, the mob all the time being in a state of fury. When we reached Lincoln's Inn Fields a policeman made his appearance, and drawing his staff prepared for an onslaught. I called to him, and told him that the duke's progress was under my direction, and that I desired he would put up his truncheon and keep himself quiet until I called upon him to act, and that he would communicate this order to the other policemen as they came up. This kept them perfectly quiet. As we proceeded, the noise of the mob attracted the workmen in the shops and manufactories, particularly in Long Acre, where the upper windows were quickly opened by workmen who, with their paper caps, rushed to join the people; but nowhere was any personal violence offered to the duke, and the respectable portions of the crowd would promptly have crushed any attempt at violence. I had walked from the West End to my chambers that morning, and I recollected that there was an excavation at the west end of Long Acre, and a large mass of paving and other stones collected there. I ordered several of the police to go there in advance quietly and occupy the ground, so as to prevent any one from making use of the stones. This they did; but, scandalous as the conduct of the mob was, I must do them the justice to say that

they showed no disposition to get at the stones. When we reached the West End streets the people tailed off a good deal. As the duke passed the United Service Club he maintained his rigid posture, and cast no glance that way, whilst a few men, who had rushed out of the club upon hearing the noise, looked on with wonder. Nothing more occurred; and when we got opposite to the clock of St. James's Palace I, for the first time, turned round, and there being only a few stragglers left, the duke and his companions shook hands with me, and thanked me, and putting their horses into a trot, reached Apsley House without further annoyance. On that day the gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn did their duty. The duke received addresses from the inhabitants of the parishes whose lower orders had disgraced themselves. The deputations included men of the highest consideration. He afterwards gave a dinner to the deputations, at which I was a guest. Harry Baring, who was one of the guests, told me that he had dined with most of the princes of Europe, but that he had never seen such a magnificent display as at this dinner. When we consider the man and the day, the scene in the streets must have been most painful to the duke; yet he never once recurred to it in any communication which I had with him. The scene is vividly before me. It is singular that I should be asked, at the end of twenty-eight years, to describe it. I have to trust wholly to memory, as I never before wrote down any incident of this painful day."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

THE DUKE AFTER THE REFORM BILL—HIS GREAT INFLUENCE IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS—LORD MELBOURNE MINISTER—HIS DISMISSAL—SIR ROBERT PEEL'S GOVERNMENT—THE DUKE CHANCELLOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The opinion which the duke had so often expressed in regard to the consequences of the ministerial measure while it was yet in progress, underwent no change after the Reform Bill became law. He believed, and among his intimate friends never hesitated to say, that the foundations of England's greatness were sapped. There was, indeed, a moment when this conviction took such fast hold of him, that he thought seriously of withdrawing for ever from public life; and spoke, half in joke half in earnest, of making a provision against the evils to come, by investing a portion of his property in foreign securities. But the duke was too much of a patriot to abandon the path of duty because of the increased difficulties with which he believed it to be beset. "The bill is now the law of the land," he used to say, "and as good citizens and loyal subjects we must conform ourselves to it. It has effected the greatest revolution that ever occurred without bloodshed in any country; and we, or those who come after us, will be taught that fact, sooner or later. But in the meanwhile, it is our duty to keep the crisis as long as we can at a distance, and to render the fall of our great institutions so gradual, that it shall do as little damage as possible, both to individuals and to the community." Accordingly, he set himself at once to collect and consolidate a party, which should act together, not for the purpose of wresting office from those who held it, but with a view to keep the powers of government, as far as might be, in the king's hands, and to hinder the king's ministers from being driven too rapidly along the declivity on which they appeared to have placed themselves. And this, in the House of Lords, he found to be, comparatively speaking, an easy task. His unswerving adherence to principle, during the late struggle; the temper and moderation which he exhibited on all occasions; his indefatigable industry, and the

patience with which he bore with the whims and crotchets of men less wise than himself; had earned for him an amount of deference and respect, such as was probably never before yielded by the peers of England to any individual belonging to their order. He became, so to speak, master of the Upper House of Parliament. Perhaps no member of that august body ever had so many proxies entrusted to him; none certainly ever spoke with more authority, from his place. Not that the duke either was, or pretended to be, an orator. His speaking, on the contrary, was, to the last, laboured, his articulation indistinct; but somehow or other he contrived always to say the right thing at the right moment, and to clothe his sentiments in language which, if not artistically eloquent or even correct, was invariably forcible. The storm of unpopularity also which broke upon him during the reform struggle, passed away. In 1832 he was insulted in the streets, and had the windows of his house broken. His very life was threatened in the manner described in the last chapter, and when he went on a certain occasion to preside at a Pitt dinner in the Freemasons' Tavern, he was obliged to drive thither armed with loaded pistols, in a carriage of which the doors were fastened by a spring. In 1833 individuals began again to salute him respectfully as he passed, and here and there the old cry was raised, "There he goes, God bless him!" With all his apparent indifference to such matters, with all his real contempt for the sort of popularity to obtain which men stoop to do mean and mischievous things, the duke was touched by this evidence of the place which he had established for himself in the affections of the English people. "I'm getting up in the market," he observed, with a cheerful laugh, one day, as he dismounted from his horse after a run with the fox-hounds at Strathfieldsaye. "What has happened; did the people cheer you?" "No, not that, but they did what was much better; every man in the field seemed anxious to be kind to me, by making way for me, and opening gates, and that sort of thing." The duke was right. He rose in the market so rapidly, that before twelve months were over, all, except the men who had most deeply slandered and done him wrong, seemed to have forgotten that he ever opposed himself to their wishes. And of all the speeches delivered by him in the House of Lords, none was so frequently quoted with approval as that in which he declared, that had he refused to go to the king's assistance when the resignation of his Whig ministers left his Majesty surrounded by difficulties, "he would have been ashamed to show his face in the streets."

I have alluded elsewhere to the mortification of some of the duke's admirers when they beheld him stoop from the eminence on which he stood at the close of the war, to become, as they expressed it, a party politician. If the results of his labours in that capacity seemed to justify their prognostications of evil, it is impossible to deny that he more than atoned for the mistake, if a mistake it was, by subsequent years of the wisest and most disinterested statesmanship. Never throughout his long and busy life did the Duke of Wellington render more important service to his country than during that protracted season of trouble, anxiety, and danger which followed the passing of the Reform Bill. Had he been less wise, less temperate, less far-seeing, less patriotic, nothing could have averted from England the horrors of a revolution—for the exasperation of parties was then more bitter than the present generation can easily understand, while the position of the king's ministers, in reference to the sovereign on the one hand, and to their own supporters on the other, abounded with difficulties. Men called each other by hard names in those days, and here and there believed what they said. No sane person now suspects, either that the Duke of Wellington harboured designs against the liberties of the people, or that Earl Grey or Lord John Russell were hostile to the monarchy. But Earl Grey and his colleagues were undoubtedly, through the force of circumstances, dependent for support not a little upon politicians to whom the Church, the House of Lords, and perhaps the throne, were objects of small reverence. And for this perhaps, among other reasons, the king made no concealment of his dislike both to his ministers and their policy. Now such a condition of affairs offered the strongest inducement to a harassing guerilla warfare on the part of the opposition, of which the effects, had they received any encouragement from high quarters, must have been fatal.

The opposition, weak in the Commons, but from wealth, intelligence and station, powerful in the country, fretted under the state to which they were reduced, and burned to escape from it. Eager to fight on every possible occasion, and confident of victory in the House of Lords, they charged their leaders with lack of courage or good faith, or both, because they restrained instead of exciting so rash a spirit. The government, on the other hand, often put to their shifts by pressure from without, brought forward measures of which they themselves scarcely approved; and sometimes, as has been admitted, would have thankfully accepted defeats from which the duke

saved them. His great object in all this was to gain time for the re-establishment throughout the country of that respect for law and the legislature which recent events had shaken. In the House of Commons ministers were, or seemed to be, all powerful. The duke was constantly on his guard to prevent a collision between the Lords and the Commons, out of which, as he well knew, the Lords, in the existing state of public feeling, could never come victorious. In like manner he set his face against the formation in the provinces of societies of which he approved the objects. He was anxious to allay, not to irritate, party feelings which were then rife, arguing that associations for political purposes, other than the Houses of Lords and Commons, were not only unconstitutional, but unsafe. These were high ends, worthy of the great man who sought them; and the means by which he laboured to bring them about, were as wise as the ends themselves. Nobody ever came to the duke for advice and went away without it. By letters, in personal interviews, now directly, at other times through the medium of a third party, he laboured to impress his own views of things upon others, and he succeeded to an extent which is without a parallel in the history of the human mind. Hence many a debate took place, in which the argument on the opposition side prevailed, or was assumed to prevail, yet no division followed hostile to the minister. The duke would enter a protest in the Journals of the House, which other Conservative peers signed with him, and the measure, whatever it might be, became law, through the will of a minority.

It is not worth while to particularise all the occasions on which the duke exercised this control over himself and others. It was thus that the Irish Reform Bill passed the House of Lords; that the interference of the government in the quarrel between Belgium and Holland was not averted; that in the civil war which broke out in Portugal, England was allowed to take part; and that the quadruple alliance in favour of the Queen of Spain, though censured, was not prevented. To this latter arrangement and the inconveniences arising out of it, the duke never referred in private except with indignation; and of his opinion of King Ferdinand he made no secret. "I can conceive nothing more wicked," he used to say, "than the conduct of that man. He misgoverned his country as long as he lived, and at his death bequeathed to it a legacy of civil war; and we forsooth, because Ferdinand's executors call themselves Liberals, must help them to carry his bad purposes into effect. I dare say it is great weak-

ness on my part to retain my interest in nations which, God knows, never behaved too well to me; but it makes my heart bleed to see Spain and Portugal given over to anarchy, when a little firmness and moderation on the part of the English Government might have prevented it."

The duke's policy of forbearance gradually made itself felt. The country settled down into a state of comparative quiet everywhere, except in Ireland, and there Daniel O'Connell was supreme. He had been infinitely useful to the government in helping them to carry their great measure, and they found it impossible now either to throw him over or to satisfy his further demands. His support thus became a source of weakness to Earl Grey, and to Lord Grey's successor at the Treasury. Hence, perhaps as much as for any other reason, the ministerial majorities in the House of Commons fell off, and the Lords began again to exercise their rights, though with extreme caution. I happen to know that already, in 1834, the duke counted on a speedy return of the Conservatives to office. It is further within my knowledge that he was averse to Sir Robert Peel's journey, at that time, into Italy, and that he spoke of it afterwards with a slight tone of bitterness. Sir Robert, however, took his departure, scarcely disguising the fact, that he wished to be out of the way lest a crisis should come. But the crisis came nevertheless. The death of Earl Spencer, and the removal of Lord Althorpe to the House of Lords, furnished the king with an opportunity for which he had long watched, and on the 14th of November the duke received a summons to attend his Majesty at Brighton.

The story of that remarkable interlude in the history of England is well known. The duke declined, himself, to form an administration, but undertook, with the assistance of Lord Lyndhurst, to keep the machine going till Sir Robert Peel should return. He was as good as his word. Sworn-in Secretary of State for the Home Department, he assumed the charge, not of that office only, but of all the public offices in London, and it is well known that at no period, either before or since, was the business of the country more regularly or carefully transacted.

The impression made upon the minds of men in general by these proceedings, no language can describe. They were astonished, confounded, and not a little amused. All wondered at his boldness, and not a few who began by denouncing the act as unconstitutional, perhaps treasonable, ended by express-

ing their admiration of the man. But the interlude came to a close; Sir Robert Peel returned from Rome. He found every office in and out of the cabinet at his disposal. He formed his administration, placing the duke at the Foreign Office, and continuing to Lord Lyndhurst the possession of the great seal. And after issuing his famous manifesto to the electors of Tamworth, he dissolved the parliament. This last step, it is but just to say, was not of his seeking; he would have greatly preferred meeting parliament as it was, with the power to dissolve in case of need, and doubtless he was right. But the duke, and those with whom he took counsel in Sir Robert's absence, thought otherwise. The consequence was that, under the influence of old prejudices, the country returned a House of Commons which the minister could not command, and on every important question as it arose he was defeated. After originating some wise measures, with which he was not permitted to go through, he found himself face to face on the 30th of March, 1835, with Lord John Russell's famous motion. And on the 7th of April, at 4 o'clock in the morning, he was left in a minority of thirty-three.

There followed next evening the resignation of the first Peel Cabinet, and the return of Lord Melbourne and his friends to Downing Street. Never again, to the day of his death, was the Duke of Wellington in charge of a distinct department of the state. A politician he continued to be,—it was impossible that he should cease to be a politician, but his line was henceforth that rather of a guide and counsellor to the nation at large, than of the busy leader of a party struggling for power. There never occurred a difficulty at home or abroad, on which he was not consulted by the minister of the day, whosoever he might be. The crown was never in a strait because of the mistakes of its servants, or through disagreements, personal or otherwise, of the cabinet, that he was not sent for to advise in the case. The crown and the people appeared alike to have confidence in his judgment, and he became more than ever an object of veneration to all classes of society.

One of the first and most remarkable proofs of the universal respect in which he was held, was evinced about this time by his elevation to the dignity of Chancellor of the University of Oxford. On the 12th of January, 1834, Lord Grenville died; and, contrary to all precedent, a proposal was made in the senate to offer to the Duke of Wellington the vacant chancellorship. The duke had no claim to this distinction on the ground

of scholarship, or even of patronage extended to scholars. He was totally unconnected with the university itself, except so far as that, simultaneously with Marshal Blücher, and the late sovereigns of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, he had received from it in 1814 the honorary degree of doctor of laws. But the heads of houses believed that they had fallen upon perilous times; and that the university stood more in need of a chancellor who should be able, as a statesman, to defend its privileges, than of one who, by his writings or otherwise, might add to its renown as a nursery of learning. As was to be expected, the leaders of the party opposed to the duke, endeavoured to throw ridicule upon the whole proceeding. Among others, a distinguished but eccentric prelate, the late Archbishop Whateley, of Dublin, is said to have waited officially upon the lord-lieutenant, and begged that he might be appointed to a troop of dragoons. When asked to give a reason for so curious a request, he replied: "Your Excellency must know that I have as good a right to be made a captain of cavalry, as the Duke of Wellington, your brother, to become Chancellor of the University of Oxford." Oxford, however, had made up her mind what to do, and went gallantly through with her purpose. The installation, which took place on the 9th of June, 1834, was one of the most brilliant affairs that had ever been witnessed; and the enthusiasm of the under-graduates, seldom under much control, proved quite overwhelming. "I perfectly understand now," observed the duke, when he met his friends later in the autumn at Walmer, "how revolutions are got up in such places as the *Ecole Militaire* in Paris, and in Warsaw." "The under-graduates were very boisterous, were they?" "Boisterous! You never saw anything like it in your life! Let these boys loose in the state in which I saw them, and give them a political object to carry, and they would revolutionise any nation under the sun."

It is not to be supposed that the duke, successful as he was in great affairs, passed through life without his own share of private and domestic trials. Perhaps the very turn of his mind, and the constant dedication of his energies to the public service, in some degree unfitted him for the enjoyment of domestic life. Perhaps, as often happens where blame is scarcely attributable to either party, he was ill-matched in his domestic relations. Be this as it may, it would be idle to conceal the fact, that the duke's home, properly so called, was never a sunny one. It is certain that his confidence was much more largely given out of the domestic circle than within it; and for this reason, even

when not abused, it scarcely filled up the measure of his aspirations. In moments of despondency, of which the crowd saw nothing, he has been heard to say, "There is nothing in this world worth living for." Yet no man felt more acutely than he the pang of severance from those to whom any share of his affections was given. From his mother he had experienced in youth and early manhood little else than neglect. As he grew into fame, pride with her expanded into affection; and when she died at the advanced age of ninety-six, he mourned for her with sincere sorrow. So also the death of the duchess, on the 22nd of April, 1831, touched him keenly. They had seen comparatively little of each other for years. There was no natural congeniality between them in tastes, habits, or pursuits; and unfortunately for both, the duchess, while she doted on her husband, never appears to have thought it necessary to adapt her own views of things to his. Hence alienation stole in, which there were no opportunities of living down, though it never resulted in a formal separation. But during her last illness, he was indefatigable in his attentions to her; and when she ceased to breathe, he evinced great emotion. She was buried at Strathfieldsaye, the duke following her to the grave, and showing every mark of respect to her memory.

CHAPTER XXXIX

DEATH OF WILLIAM IV.—ACCESSION OF QUEEN VICTORIA—THE DUKE IN AND OUT OF PARLIAMENT—THE DUKE'S GREAT AFFECTION FOR HER MAJESTY—HIS PROCEEDINGS AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

On the 20th of June, 1837, died William IV., leaving the vacant throne to be filled by her present most gracious Majesty, then barely of age to exercise the functions of royalty. No change was thereby effected, either in the state of political parties in parliament, or in the position of the Duke of Wellington in connection with them. Her Majesty retained in office the minister whom she found at the head of affairs, and the duke took his seat, as heretofore, on the opposition benches in the House of Lords. But the same wise discretion which had characterised his proceedings since the passing of the Reform Bill characterised them still. He supported every measure, no matter by whom proposed, which he believed to be deserving of support. He resisted every proposition, the tendency of which he believed to be mischievous. He would be no party to a factious move, however sure the prospect of success; and he restrained his own friends, over and over again, from pushing fair—though perhaps unseasonable—contests to an extremity. The honour of the crown, the safety and well-being of the country, were the sole objects which he appeared to keep in view; and perhaps his prudent reserve exercised as great an influence in securing them, as the wisdom of the cabinet on the one hand, and the zeal and activity in criticising its policy among opposition statesmen on the other.

The duke's public duties, apart from those of a peer of parliament, were at this time such as devolved upon him from his connection with Hampshire, as lord-lieutenant of the county; with the Cinque Ports, as lord warden; with the Tower of London, as constable; and with the University of Oxford, as its chancellor. Of the University of Oxford his care was sleepless, without being troublesome. It was a season of difficulty, if not of danger, for the demand for change was incessant,

and this, so far as it appeared to him unjust or unreasonable, he resisted. It is proper to add, that he seldom acted on such occasions without previous consultation with those whose knowledge of the subject could not fail to be more extensive than his own, and that before making up his mind to any course of proceeding, he heard, and carefully considered, everything that could be said, as well against as for it. Hence, after checking repeated attempts to innovate upon the rights both of the University and of particular colleges, he assented to that commission of inquiry, from the report of which have emanated changes acceptable to all; to some, because they were not undertaken on compulsion, to others, because in themselves they are changes for the better.

Of the duke's attention to the business of the Cinque Ports, it is impossible to speak too highly. No court of lode-manage was ever held during his periodical visits to Walmer without his presiding over its deliberations; and often, if the occasion seemed to require, he would travel from London, and even from Strathfieldsaye, to Dover, on purpose to take part in them. For it was one of his maxims, that whatever charge a man undertakes, he is bound, whether the business in hand relate to great or small matters, to treat it as if it were important. And in his estimation few matters could be more important than to provide competent pilots for the navigation of the Channel, and to maintain among them when appointed strict discipline. He was, as is well known, the last of those functionaries permitted to exercise powers which took their rise in times gone by, when Sandwich was an important naval station, and the defence of the coast, from the North Foreland to Hastings, depended mainly upon the inhabitants of the towns which lie between them. But it cannot be said in this, as in most other cases of the kind, that an institution once vigorous expired at last of its own innate corruption. The pilotage of the Channel was never so carefully attended to as just before the right of superintendence and selection passed from the lord warden for ever.

The same reforming hand which effected so much at Dover and along the Kentish coast, was felt in the Tower also. Hitherto the constables of that fortress had been in the habit of selling warder's places, whilst offices superior to that of warder were dispensed, worthily or not, under the pressure of political or private influence. The duke put an end to all this. Warderships under him became prizes to which meri-

torious non-commissioned officers might aspire; and higher posts were given to gentlemen who had done good service as commissioned officers in the field. One of the most deserving of these was the late Colonel Gurwood, a distinguished veteran of the Peninsula and of Waterloo, to whom the world is indebted for the greatest military work which has appeared in any age or in any country. His compilation of the Wellington despatches was begun in 1835, when he himself held a staff-appointment at Portsmouth. It arose out of a previous publication—a collected edition of the duke's general orders. In the progress of both works the duke took a very lively interest, himself reading the proof-sheets, and striking out with his own hand every sentence, and indeed every word which was likely to give unnecessary pain to individuals. It was due to the editor of such works that the country should mark its sense of the services which he had rendered to posterity, and the duke, as representing the country, bestowed upon him, when it fell vacant, the lieutenancy of the Tower, which, with the honorary dignity of squire to his patron, Gurwood held to the day of his death.

Equally assiduous in his habits as Lord-lieutenant of Hampshire, the duke neglected no application that was made to him; and received at Strathfieldsaye everybody who came to him on public business. He made a point, likewise, of dismissing all other demands upon his time that he might be at home to receive and entertain the judges when they arrived in the county on circuit. At the bottom of this practice, as of many others to which the duke was addicted, lay that which seems to have been the grand principle of his life. The judges represented the sovereign; and no claim of society, no call even of duty, was strong enough to hinder him from paying to them the same marks of respect which his loyalty would have induced him to pay to the sovereign, had she been personally present.

Of the relations in which he stood towards the royal lady who now happily fills the throne of these realms, it is scarcely necessary to speak. They were of the most intimate and even affectionate nature. By every possible token of public esteem and private confidence her Majesty's regard for her great subject was shown; while the duke's loyalty to the sovereign was, in her Majesty's case, mixed up with such feelings as animate an aged and experienced parent towards a child whom he not only loves but respects. He remained, moreover, under every change of circumstances, on the best terms, personally, with her constitutional advisers. The consequence was that Lord

Melbourne, appreciating aright the perfect integrity of his character, expressed neither jealousy nor surprise when his royal mistress desired from time to time to have the benefit of the duke's opinion; and took in excellent part the avowal, that her Majesty considered the Duke of Wellington to be not only the greatest but the best and wisest of her subjects. All this soon got abroad, and tended more and more to replace him in the affections of the English people, who, though, like the natives of other free states, they are not always under the guidance of judgment and moderation, seldom prove permanently ungrateful to those who serve them faithfully.

The ceremony of her Majesty's coronation took place in 1838. All the crowned heads of Europe sent special ambassadors to represent them on that occasion—Louis Philippe selecting for the service one of the ablest of the duke's former opponents, Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia. Marshal Soult was received wherever he showed himself in London with such a burst of enthusiasm as surprised as much as it delighted the old warrior; and the duke, in particular, embraced every opportunity of treating him with kindness and urbanity. A pleasant sight it was to see these two aged rivals in arms seated amicably together; and very gratifying to listen to the terms in which, on fitting occasions, they spoke one of the other. This was especially the case at the Mansion House, when, in reply to a toast which coupled their names together, the duke alluded to Soult in language which seemed to stir every generous feeling in the French marshal's heart. Marshal Soult, during his stay in London, was a frequent visitor at Apsley House, and made there the acquaintance of many officers with whose names the events of the Peninsular war had rendered him familiar. Among others, the late Lord Hill was presented to him, and was greeted in these words, "What! have I found you at last? You, whom I followed so long without ever being able to overtake you." This was said in allusion to Hill's masterly retreat from Madrid to Alba de Tormes, after the failure before Burgos. It was meant as a compliment to the vigilance and activity of the English general, and as a compliment Lord Hill, the best-hearted and gentlest of men, accepted it.

Though meeting Lord Melbourne in private on friendly terms, and ever ready to advise when consulted on points which might be referred to him, the duke never, as a public man, compromised his own principles, or affected to approve, far less to support, measures which contradicted them. He

condemned, on all fitting occasions, the policy of the government in conniving at the growth of Mr. O'Connell's influence in Ireland, and denounced what he called its truckling to chartist agitators in England and to the chiefs of the democratic party in the Canadas. Its relations with foreign states, though less complicated than they had been, were still, according to his view of such matters, unsatisfactory; and with the general treatment of the colonies, and especially of the West Indies, he was by no means pleased. But while he took care to express himself freely on these subjects, he carefully avoided bringing on premature divisions; and lost no opportunity of urging his supporters in the House of Lords to bide their time. That, however, which the leaders of the opposition would have willingly deferred, the ministers themselves at length precipitated. Lord Melbourne, unable to cope with the question of the Corn Laws, and with the absolute anarchy into which Ireland was falling, took advantage of a defeat on the suspension of the constitution of Jamacia to send in his resignation. This was in 1839, and proved to be a step for which no one in or out of parliament was prepared. The queen, young and without experience, could not but feel the loss of a minister who had been, so to speak, her first instructor in public affairs; while the duke, however instinctively adverse to Whig government, was not disposed, if the step could be avoided, to sanction a change for which he believed that the public mind was scarcely ripe. Being sent for by her Majesty, however, he at once obeyed the summons, and recommended that she should take counsel with Sir Robert Peel. From the complication of mistakes which arose out of that interview, it is not worth while to raise the veil which time has thrown over them. There was no difficulty in allotting the great offices of state to individuals recommended by the future minister; but when the royal household came to be touched, misunderstandings arose. I need not go further into the discussion of these matters than to state that the minister, in making one demand, was understood to make another; and that her Majesty, refusing to submit to what had been represented to her as an unprecedented outrage on her personal dignity, Sir Robert Peel felt that his commission was at an end. The result was that, after an interregnum of less than a week, Lord Melbourne returned to office, and that for two years more the affairs of the country were conducted as they had previously been.

Though restored to office the ministers were far from regaining the confidence of the country. Their majorities in the House

of Commons fell off from day to day; and at last, in the summer of 1841, a direct vote of want of confidence was carried. Nothing now remained except either to resign or to dissolve parliament, and the latter expedient being tried, the issues went against them. An amendment to the address in answer to the queen's speech was carried in both Houses, and ministers immediately resigned. In the new cabinet, of which Sir Robert Peel became the head, the duke accepted a seat, but without office. It was an arrangement dictated entirely by that principle of self-abnegation, which was stronger, perhaps, in the Duke of Wellington than in any public man of his age; and though it placed him, under a constitutional government, in a somewhat anomalous position, it had its advantages too. It left him leisure to discuss every question, both of home and foreign policy, without imposing upon him the labour of attending to the details of administration; while it placed him, towards both the people and the crown, in the position of an independent and therefore unprejudiced adviser. No great while elapsed, however, ere the anomaly, if such it deserved to be called, passed away. In 1842 Lord Hill died, and the command of the army, which thereby became vacant, was at once pressed upon the duke. Moreover, in order to avert the risk of his again resigning it, a patent of office was made out in his favour and presented to him. It is curious to contrast the position of the Duke of Wellington, in this as well as in other stages of his career, with that of his illustrious predecessor in glory and in a nation's caprices, John Duke of Marlborough. The latter, when driven into exile, was charged, among other delinquencies, with having plotted to obtain from Queen Anne an appointment by patent to the command of her armies. The former, without any solicitation on his part, was by Queen Victoria constituted, by patent under the great seal, commander-in-chief of her armies, during the term of his natural life.

The command of the army thus conferred upon him, the duke retained to the day of his death; and as there is probably no interval in his public career with respect to which so much misunderstanding prevails, it appears to me that I cannot do better than give here a brief and connected view of his habits of acting and thinking; and of the estimation in which, as a man of business, he was held by those who had the best and readiest means of forming a correct judgment on that subject.

It was the duke's custom, when no special business pressed, to arrive at the Horse Guards about one o'clock in the day;

and during the sitting of parliament to remain there, till his presence in the House of Lords was required. His attendance in the Lords was, as I need scarcely observe, very punctual, and he almost always arrived in time for prayers, or soon after. When parliament was not sitting, he often remained at the Horse Guards till six, and sometimes till seven in the evening.

As soon as he entered his room, his messenger proceeded to inform the several heads of departments of his arrival; and they all waited upon him with their papers, if they had any reports to make, or points on which to consult him. They came, however, one by one, and one by one he saw them. Nor was this ceremony omitted, even if there happened to be no special reason for the interview. On many occasions the officer looked in, wished him good morning, and told him the news of the day; and if there followed the statement, "I have nothing with which to trouble your grace this morning," the never-failing answer was, "I am very glad to hear it." Nor need it be a matter of surprise that he should so express himself. The business of his own department proved often to be that which made the smallest demand upon his time; and wearied, as he generally was when he arrived at the Horse Guards, a respite from any fresh strain on his attention could not prove otherwise than agreeable.

"I remember," writes one who knew him well,[1] "when his own friends were in office, going over to him on one occasion with my box full of papers, when he turned to me, and asking what I had, observed rather angrily that he had already had thirteen boxes referred to him that morning, before he left Apsley House." The same correspondent observes, "Speaking from the experience which I had of him, I should say that the duke was a remarkably agreeable man to do business with, because of his clear and ready decision. However much I may have seen him irritated and excited with the subjects which I have repeatedly had to bring under his notice, I have no recollection of his ever having made use of a harsh or discourteous expression to me, or of his having dismissed me without a distinct and explicit answer or decision in the case under consideration. Like all good men of business, who consider well before coming to a decision, his grace was accustomed to adhere strictly to precedent; to the decisions he may have previously come to on similar cases. This practice greatly facilitated the task of those who had to transact business with him, seeing that all we

[1] Private letter from General Sir George Brown, G.C.B.

had to do in concluding our statement of any particular case. was to refer to his decision on some similar one.

"During the latter years of his life, the duke had a great objection to waste his time in deciphering or making out the meaning of cramped or indistinct manuscripts. It was customary, therefore, to have all such clearly written out by a clerk, to whose hand he was accustomed, and to announce every case by a short statement or *précis;* in which, however, no one ever attempted to dictate to him what his decision should be. The *précis* generally concluded with some such words as these:—'Perhaps your grace may consider that this case can be disposed of as was done in so and so.'

"These *précises* were always written out distinctly in half margin. His grace usually gave his answers on the opposite side of the page, for the most part laconically, but sometimes in great detail. These memoranda of his never failed to exhibit that thorough acquaintance with the details of the military service, for which he was remarkable. And if, at any time, he happened to be at fault, or that recent changes had occurred, modifying regimental matters since he was intimately associated with them, the circumstance had only to be pointed out. He would listen with the greatest patience to such explanations, and never made the slightest difficulty in modifying his memoranda so as to meet them."

Although the duke did not always read the correspondence in the cases laid before him, he nevertheless insisted that it should invariably accompany the statement or *précis,* in such order of arrangement as that he should be able to refer to it, if found requisite, without difficulty or delay.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that all orders for the movement of troops, for the assembling of general courts-martial, etc. etc., as well as leaves of absence to officers, and furloughs to the men, emanate from the commander-in-chief. In granting leave of absence to any but general officers in command of districts, and officers commanding regiments, the adjutant-general seldom troubled the duke by referring to him. But the applications of general and commanding officers were always submitted. On such occasions his unvarying question was, "How is the duty to be done?" and if the arrangement proposed seemed to him satisfactory, he never refused the indulgence.

There was nothing of which the duke was more jealous, than

of proposals which involved, or threatened to involve, any addition to the expense of maintaining the army. His scruples on that head originated in two sources. In the first place, the duke as a minister and a statesman was, perhaps, the most rigid economist in modern times. He effected larger reductions in the public expenditure during the brief period of his administration, than had been effected before, or have been effected since, by any other head of the government within the memory of man. In the next place, he retained to the last a persuasion that the less the army, its expenditure and general management, is brought into public notice, the better. "Depend upon it, gentlemen" (a common expression of his when he was in earnest), "that the greatest enemies the army has in this country, are those who would add unnecessarily to its expense."

It was during his administration of affairs at the Horse Guards that the questions of improving the armament of the troops, and establishing a better system of education in regiments, originated; and a general impression seems to prevail that he stoutly resisted both. This is far from being correct. In regard to the infantry soldier's old weapon, it is perfectly true that he often spoke of it as the most formidable thing of its kind in Europe; and that he was accustomed to quote the authority of Marshal Marmont in corroboration of that sentiment. But so far was he from expressing any desire to check the progress of improvement, that he has often been heard to declare that, "looking to the amount of mechanical skill in this country, and the numerical weakness of our army, as compared with those of the great continental powers, British troops ought to be the best armed troops in the world." Accordingly it was with his express sanction and approval, that the Minié musket was introduced; and the manufacture of 28,000, undertaken by Lord Anglesey, who was then Master-General of the Ordnance. The one point to which the duke adhered was, that the old bore should be retained, partly because the greater size of the English bullet had rendered it much more effective than any other in former wars; partly because, in the event of the stock of conical bullets running short, the troops, in case of emergency, would be able to use the cartridges which were already in store. Besides, the fabrication of the new weapon was necessarily a work of time, and it could be introduced only by degrees into the ranks. He would not, under such circumstances, consent to have two different kinds of ammunition in

use, out of which confusion must almost inevitably arise were the army to take the field in a hurry.

It was with this weapon, the Minié musket, bored up to the diameter of the old firelock, that the battles of the Alma and of Inkermann were fought. The Enfield, which is a lighter weapon of the same construction, though of narrower calibre than the Minié, was introduced when Lord Hardinge presided at the Ordnance Office, and came ultimately to supersede the Minié.

The first specimens of the Minié musket made use of were put into the hands of detachments from Chatham and other places, which assembled at Woolwich for practice, under Captain Brownrigg, of the Grenadier Guards. Anxious about the matter, and desirous himself of witnessing the operation, the duke arranged with Sir George Brown, then adjutant-general, that they should proceed to Woolwich together; Lord Charles Wellesley, the duke's younger son, bearing them company. "There were about a hundred men," says General Brown, "extended in a line of skirmishers for the purpose of firing at a target, placed near the butt. I took the duke up to the butt, in order to see the practice they made, but he did not remain there five minutes before he expressed a wish to go back to the skirmishers. It was not the practice made that he desired to witness,—of that he had no doubt,—but the loading and manipulation of the cartridges, in respect to which he was anxious to satisfy himself. He accordingly went along the whole line, watching each man as he loaded his musket; and having satisfied himself that there was no difficulty, at once recommended that the manufacture of the arms should be proceeded with. As soon as a portion of them was prepared and distributed to the troops, it became necessary to issue some instructions in regard to the mode of loading and using them. I accordingly drew up a short paper of instructions, and submitted it to his grace for approval. In reading it over, I saw him deliberately pass his pen through the word 'rifle' wherever I had used it; and on my asking him why he had done so, he explained 'we must not allow them to fancy they are all riflemen, or they will become conceited, and be wanting next to be dressed in green, or some other *jack-a-dandy* uniform.' He then went on to say, that there was nothing we ought to watch more jealously than any infringement on the national uniform, nor anything more important to maintain, than the solidity and steadiness of our infantry."

Of this infantry,—of what he called the infantry of the old

stamp,—it is well known that the duke entertained the highest admiration. He believed that the world had never seen anything equal to it. In illustration of this fact, Sir George Brown has kindly communicated to me the following facts:—

"It was my practice, while in office, to inspect the troops, reporting direct to head-quarters; and to make a verbal as well as a written report of the state in which I found them to the duke. Returning on one occasion from the inspection at Canterbury of the 97th regiment, which had recently landed from North America, I informed his grace that I had found the regiment in excellent order; that the men looked robust and healthy, and that they were well drilled, and remarkably steady under arms. I concluded by stating, that they had adopted no newfangled notions, either in their dress or appointments, and that, on the whole, the regiment presented the best specimen I had lately seen of the old stamp of British infantry, and appeared to me to be all that could be desired. His answer was, 'I am very glad to hear it, very glad indeed. Depend upon it, there is nothing like them in the world in the shape of infantry. Let the men have their furloughs, and visit their friends.'

"When he was at Walmer, in the winter, I always apprised him as often as I was about to inspect the troops at that place, and at Dover. He generally attended these inspections in his Lord Warden's uniform, accompanied by any friends he might have staying with him at the castle; and when I found any corps in particularly good order, I used to ask his grace to say a complimentary word or two to the commanding officer, which he always willingly did. On one occasion, at Walmer, when the depôts of two regiments were there, and had been formed into one small battalion under the senior officer, the duke, after he had performed several evolutions, in order to amuse himself, and no doubt expecting to puzzle the major, desired him to place his battalion in line between the spire of a chapel to the north of the barrack-yard, and a windmill standing out in the fields to the southward.

"It may not, perhaps," observes my correspondent, "be very generally known, that one individual has no means of adjusting himself exactly on an alignment between two distant points; and that it can only be accomplished by two or more mutually dressing each other on the points respectively. Having allowed the major, therefore, to boggle at it for some time, the duke good-humouredly himself took the matter in hand, showing

how it might be done; and in the course of his ride afterwards, set to work on the downs drilling the party which was with him in the same exercise!"

There was not one of all his exploits of which the duke loved more to speak, than of the affair with Marmont's cavalry at El Boden. This was never done with a view to self-glorification; but in illustration of the steadiness and discipline of his troops, of which he held that it afforded a most remarkable proof.

"On the same day to which I refer," says General Brown, "when the battalion was formed into square, he broke out on the subject, declaring that 'it was with two or three squares such as that, *we* beat off all the French cavalry. Ay, not only beat them off, but attacked them, and recovered the guns which those fellows were about to carry off.' And then he made me move the square, without reducing it, in order to show how easily it could be done."

The duke, except in bad weather, generally proceeded to his office at the Horse Guards on foot or on horseback. If on horseback he usually rode through the park, if on foot he came by the streets, and always alone. Everybody knew him; and everybody, high and low, rich and poor, saluted him as he passed. He never failed to acknowledge these marks of respect in his own peculiar way, by touching his hat with the two first fingers of the right hand, which he held upright, the palm of the hand itself being turned to the front. The duke's punctuality in keeping engagements is well known. It is not, perhaps, so generally understood, that he was very particular in his record of time. He used often to step into Dent's shop at Charing Cross, on his way to the office, to see how his watch was going, and to put it right. This watch was made by Mr. Dent, after instructions given to him by the duke himself; and besides having hands so arranged that the duke, by bringing his fingers round upon them, could tell in the dark what o'clock it was to a minute, it wound up from the handle.

The duke was no great promoter of high education among the working classes, and could not, therefore, be expected to originate schemes for its advancement in the army; but to say that he fought against the establishment of the new school system in regiments, is to say too much. He was jealous, whether rightly or wrongly, of the interference of the War Office in that matter, and believed that the arrangements for providing corps with more efficient school-masters would have been better left in the hands of the commander-in-chief. But

when the subject was fairly taken up, he never set himself against it; declaring on the contrary that, as far as his influence could avail, it should have fair play. Even in regard to the compulsory attendance of recruits at school, he declined to act upon the suggestions of those who were opposed to it. He did not deny that the recruit, on first joining, has so much both to learn and to unlearn in other respects, that to compel his attendance in school for a couple of hours daily, seems to tax his powers of application too far. But having accepted the proposition as made to him by the Secretary of War, nothing could induce him to go back from it. Indeed, it was a matter of principle with the duke never, as commander-in-chief, to place himself in an attitude of antagonism to any department of the queen's government; but, on the contrary, to afford all the assistance in his power to carry into effect the views of her Majesty's responsible advisers.

The general order which he issued, defining the sort of examination to which candidates for first commissions and for promotion should be subjected, indicates pretty plainly what his opinions were on the subject of education for officers. Long before that question was publicly agitated, he found opportunities over and over again to state, that a young gentleman intended for the military service of this country ought to receive the best education which the country can afford; that looking to the duties which he might be called upon to discharge, such education ought not to be too professional; and that it was nowhere to be procured of a higher or more practical shape than at one of our great public schools or universities. "An officer in the British army," he used to say, "is not a mere fighting machine. He may be called upon any day to serve the crown as governor of a colony, or in disturbed districts as a magistrate; and he will not be able to fill either post well, unless he know something of the constitution and laws of the land." The duke's predilection in favour of military academies, and even of staff colleges, was not, therefore, very decided.

"You think that officers ought to be educated specially for the staff. Perhaps you would like to have a staff corps also. That is what they do in France, and in other continental countries, and the consequence is that their staff corps are generally made up of pedants and coxcombs. I am sure that I found the young gentlemen who came to me from High Wickham to be pretty much of that stamp. Indeed, the only good staff officers that I had, were men who knew their regimental

duties thoroughly, and possessing a fair share of natural ability, soon learned to apply the principles of regimental handling to the handling of larger bodies. I don't mean to say that officers of engineers and of artillery can do without some knowledge of mathematics, or that sketching is not useful, as far as it goes, in all branches of the service; but if you limit a general in the selection of his staff to mathematicians, or to the members of a particular corps, instead of giving him, as he has now, the choice of the whole army, you will soon find that you have not chosen the best means of placing talent where it may be most usefully employed for the public service."

There was no question in the duke's day about permanently organising the army, on the home establishment, into divisions and brigades. I am, therefore, unable to say how far he would or would not have approved of the arrangement. But looking to the strong opinions which he entertained against increasing the expense of our military establishments, and even against bringing the army prominently into public view, it seems probable that the plan would not have secured his hearty approval. Even camps of instruction he never recommended, which it is natural to suppose he would have done, had he considered that the sort of experience to be acquired in them was adequate to the cost. Be this, however, as it may, there can be no doubt of his hostility to other changes which have been effected since his death. Never having himself experienced the slightest inconvenience in his intercourse with the War Office, as it used to be, or with the Board of Ordnance, he was entirely opposed to the principle of amalgamation which now prevails. He used, on the contrary, to speak of the Ordnance as a perfect model for boards, and of the master-generalship as affording the best constitutional means of bringing an officer of experience and ability into the cabinet.

The duke was far from being satisfied with the constitution and management of the medical department of the army. He believed that it had become less instead of more efficient, through its intimate connection with the War Office. And with respect to the commissariat, his opinion was that of most men who have seen war, or thought much about it. It can never be rendered efficient except in the field; and should therefore, in time of peace, be kept to all intents and purposes in abeyance.

There never lived a man in high station and authority more patient than the duke of the involuntary errors of those under

him, or more anxious to keep them right if they were inadvertently going wrong. The perverse blunderings of wrong-headed officials, on the other hand, provoked him exceedingly. The following anecdotes will better illustrate these facts than any statements of mine.

A young officer of a distinguished regiment once brought his soldier servant to a court-martial, on charges—I believe, of theft—which he failed to establish. The commanding officer, conceiving that the officer had deliberately stated what was untrue, insisted upon his retiring from the corps; and was unfortunately supported in his view of the case by a majority of the other officers, who threatened, if the young man persisted in remaining with the regiment, to send him to Coventry. This coming to the knowledge of the young man's father, he complained through the adjutant-general to the duke, and the adjutant-general being desired to investigate the case, found that the ground assumed by the offended commanding officer was quite untenable. The commanding officer, however, an honourable but obstinate man, would not consent to change his course; and the case, as a matter of necessity, was laid before the duke. It did not find him unprepared. He had read all the papers, and knew every incident as it had fallen out during the progress of the disagreement; and now, making the colonel sit down, he argued the matter with him, and advised, more like an indulgent father reasoning with a son, than a commander-in-chief speaking to a subordinate. All, however, was of no avail. The colonel would not be convinced; and at last said, that if the officer were allowed to remain in the regiment he must quit it.

Upon this the duke rose from his chair, and looking with some severity at the colonel, said, "that hitherto he had spoken to him as an officer of greater experience than his own; he must now address him as commander-in-chief of the army, while he told him, that his conduct in this matter was unreasonable, and the views of discipline which he maintained quite incorrect."

I wish that it were in my power to add, that the high-minded but mistaken commanding officer was brought round to see the truth at last. Unfortunately it was not so. In anguish of spirit, and in spite of the advice of all his friends, he retired from the service by the sale of his commission; while the young officer behaved so gallantly throughout the Crimean campaign, that with one consent his brother officers took him to their

hearts again, and whatever prejudice might have existed for a season against him, passed away.

My next anecdote is somewhat different, both in its details and in its moral. There were two noble lords then in the army, a marquis and an earl, both cavalry officers, though the marquis is now dead, who managed to be in constant hot water with somebody or another, and gave, in consequence, a great deal of trouble at the Horse Guards. It happened that on a particular occasion the adjutant-general went into the duke's room with a bundle of papers in his hand, and found him seated at his table with a large pile of correspondence spread out before him. This was at Walmer, where, more perhaps than anywhere else, the duke disliked to be worried with disputes and misunderstandings on points of discipline among officers; which, indeed, he declared never could take place, if officers would only study and make themselves acquainted with the regulations and established practice of the service. Looking up, evidently out of humour, the duke asked what the adjutant-general had there; and when the answer was, "Another complaint from Lord ——," the duke seized the papers which were before him with both hands, dashed them down with a thump upon the table, and throwing himself back in his chair and crossing his arms on his chest, exclaimed, "By ——, these two lords, my Lord C—— and my Lord L——, would require a commander-in-chief for themselves; there is no end to their complaints and remonstrances."

It turned out that the papers which the duke had before him comprised a correspondence which had been forwarded to him by post between Lord L—— and the military secretary, in consequence of the objections raised by the former to the examination of candidates for commissions in the regiment of which he was colonel.

The duke, as is well known, could not bear to be interrupted when engaged in business which he wished to transact in solitude. All who were acquainted with his habits, whether at the Horse Guards or elsewhere, did their best on such occasions to prevent his privacy from being broken in upon. With reasonable men they succeeded; with others they failed. General Brown has given the following story of himself:—"I don't know whether or not you are aware of the circumstance, that the duke not only understood, but could write the Spanish language with considerable ease. I was going into his room one day, when Lord Raglan told me I had better not, for his

grace was at that moment writing a Spanish note to Marshal Narvaez, who happened then to be in London." Of course General Brown followed Lord Raglan's advice. Not so a gallant officer of higher rank, who, either on that or some other day, desired, at an equally inconvenient moment, to have an interview with the commander-in-chief. It was in vain that Lord Raglan, then Lord Fitzroy Somerset, told him that the duke was much engaged, and that it would not do just at that moment to interrupt him. The noble officer insisted on Lord Raglan going to the duke, which he at last agreed to do, placing his friend at the same time so close to the door, that he could overhear the terms in which his desire for an audience was received. I need not stop to particularise them. They were of such a nature as led to the precipitate retreat of the intruder; and they probably induced him to be guided ever after by the counsels of those who were more conversant than himself with the duke's feelings and habits.

There is a strange belief abroad that the duke cared little for the comforts of the soldier in barracks, or his rational and healthy recreations when off duty. This is a mistake. It was under his *régime* that the greatest improvement ever made in the soldier's condition as the inhabitant of a barrack-room was introduced. Till he became commander-in-chief, each bed contained two soldiers; and in many barracks the beds were arranged, like berths on board of ship, in two tiers. The duke did away with these practices, and gave every soldier his own bed; between which and the bed next to it a certain space was ordered to be kept clear. He was at the head of the army also when ball-courts were established, and cricket-grounds prepared at large military stations. To every suggestion that was offered for improving ventilation, as well as for affording facilities to improved cooking, and the means of cleanliness in the men's rooms, he gave prompt and favourable attention. He believed, indeed, that in this, as in other matters, ideas in themselves good might be carried too far; and that there was some danger, both of over-taxing the liberality of parliament and of spoiling the soldier, by first creating for him, and then supplying, wants which before enlistment he had never felt. But this did not hinder him from going as far as he believed to be right in bettering the soldier's condition, and dealing liberally with him. He never, indeed, became a convert to the notion, that the ranks can in this country be filled with persons of what is called a respectable position in life. He still looked to want

of other employment, and to idle habits, as the readiest sources of recruitment. And so believing, he was reluctant to part with the power of maintaining discipline through the dread of corporal punishment. But all this never prevented him, on proper occasions, from standing forward as the champion of the rights and of the honour of the army. When the Ten Years' Enlistment Act was brought forward, and proposals were made for granting to non-commissioned officers and privates rewards for good conduct, he supported both measures. He did so, however, in the former case, only after he had obtained the insertion of a clause in the bill, whereby ten years' men were allowed to re-enlist, counting their back service towards establishing a right to a pension. For, as he arrived at the conclusion that a good soldier will always re-enlist, so he held that the efficiency of an army depends quite as much upon the experience and soldierly habits of the men as upon the talents of the officers. And he illustrated his case by referring to the triumphs which a handful of British troops had recently achieved in China, Africa, and India. "I ask you, my lords," he said, after describing the night attack of the 80th regiment at Sobraon on some Sikh guns which were plunging shot among them in their bivouac, "I ask whether such a feat could have been performed, under such circumstances, except by old soldiers. It would have been impossible. Bear in mind the conduct of the Emperor Napoleon with respect to old soldiers; remember the manner in which he employed them. Recollect, too, how much they are prized by every power all over the world; and then, I will once more entreat your lordships never to consent to any measure which would deprive her Majesty's service of old and experienced men; and thus pave the way for disasters which assuredly would follow when the army should come to be employed in war."

The same generous spirit appeared to animate him, as often as the opportunity was afforded of speaking of the services of the army in the presence of an enemy. It was he who, when, at a critical moment, the Court of Directors recalled Lord Ellenborough, advised that Sir Henry Hardinge should take his place; and who, by and by, after the affair of Chillianwallah, forced the late Sir Charles Napier upon the reluctant authorities in Leadenhall Street. Indeed, he went further; for when Sir Charles expressed himself disinclined to serve again under masters with whom he was dissatisfied, the duke overcame the scruple by exclaiming, "Then I must go myself." The result

proved that there was no need for either Napier or anybody else to avert a disaster. Lord Gough had won the battle of Guzerat, and subdued the Sikhs before Napier quitted England. But not the less flattering to Sir Charles was this acknowledgment on the part of the great duke that he held the military talents of that distinguished soldier in the highest esteem. It is, however, fair to add, that, admiring him as a soldier, the duke was not always pleased with Napier's proceedings in time of peace, or with the terms in which he was wont to deliver an opinion. The duke decided against the conqueror of Scinde in his difference with the late Marquis of Dalhousie; and criticised Sir Charles's order against gaming in the army in the following ludicrous manner. His attention being drawn to it one day in conversation, he looked at the speaker, leaned back in his chair, moved his head slowly from side to side, but said nothing. "Don't you think he is right?" was the question which followed. "I am of opinion, with Napoleon," replied the duke, "that we had better wash our foul linen at home."

CHAPTER XL

BREAK UP OF SIR ROBERT PEEL'S GOVERNMENT—CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE EARL OF DERBY

It belongs to the biographer of Sir Robert Peel to relate how public affairs were managed between 1841 and 1846. The administration was upon the whole very successful. It put an end to Mr. O'Connell's influence in Ireland. It readjusted the balance between revenue and expenditure. Many changes were introduced into the commercial and fiscal system of the country, which without satisfying the founders of the Corn Law League, gave great offence to the Conservative party. By and by came the Irish famine, and with it Sir Robert Peel's desire to get rid of the corn laws altogether. In this desire the Duke of Wellington did not participate. He was unable to comprehend how the free admission of foreign wheat could benefit that portion of the empire wherein the people were without the means of purchasing wheaten bread at any price. He advocated rather the gratuitous supply of maize to the famishing Irish, till measures could be adopted for employing them in remunerative labour. He was not indeed averse, should the necessity arise, to suspend the operation of the corn laws, by an order in council; but he strongly objected, and the majority of his colleagues did the same, to their sudden repeal. The duke, however, though jealous for the political influence of the landed gentry, which he believed to be dependent on the continuance of the corn laws, was still more jealous for a retention of the powers of government in safe hands. Hence when those differences in the cabinet arose which led to Sir Robert Peel's resignation, and when Lord John Russell's failure to form a government compelled Sir Robert to resume office, the duke made at once a sacrifice of his own opinions, and used every endeavour to bring his friends, in the cabinet and out of it, to the same state of mind. What the reasons were which induced him to follow this course, will be best understood if I give an extract from a letter addressed by him to a noble marquis, with whom he lived on terms of intimacy, and whom

he was anxious both on public and private grounds to reconcile to a policy which had by that time become inevitable. "Lord John Russell," the letter says, "saw her Majesty on the 10th of December. On the 11th, he undertook to form an administration, and continued his efforts to do so till Saturday, the 20th. It is necessary to bear in mind all these dates, for they are important.

"During the interval between the 10th and the 20th of December, those members of the cabinet who had objected to the plan proposed by the minister, were required to state whether they, or any of them, were prepared or disposed to form an administration on the principle of maintaining the corn laws as they are. I myself, and I believe all the rest, answered that they were not so prepared; and I added, that in spite of all that was said or written about protection, nobody had ever heard of any individual approaching the queen with the advice that she should form an administration on that principle.

"When Lord John resigned his commission on the 20th of December, her Majesty sent for Sir Robert Peel; who, before he went, wrote to me and informed me that, if the queen should desire it, he would resume his office, and, even if he stood alone, would, as her Majesty's minister, enable her Majesty to meet her parliament, rather than that her Majesty should be reduced to the necessity of taking for her minister a member of the League, or any of those connected with its politics.

"As soon as I heard of this determination, I applauded it, and declared my determination to co-operate in its execution. For the question to be considered then was, not what the corn laws should be, but whether the queen should have a government; and I felt myself bound to stand by the sovereign, as I had done in 1834."

It thus appears that unwilling as the duke was to assent to arrangements calculated in his opinion to affect injuriously the landed interests, he was still more reluctant to see a Whig administration again in office, with the prospect not remote of a considerable accession to it of the Corn Law League or Radical element.

That the duke over-estimated the immediate danger of this combination to the great institutions of the country, experience has made manifest. Posterity, however, would be unable to arrive at a just estimate of his character, were any phase of his great mind, however apparently extravagant, kept out of view.

I consider myself bound, therefore, to paint him, as he has painted himself in an unrestrained and generous correspondence. On the other hand, his loyalty to a pledge once given, no consideration whatever could shake. Many letters were addressed to him by politicians, in and out of parliament, calling upon him to stand firm, and assuring him that the country would support him. Among others the late Mr. John Wilson Croker wrote, in a style highly characteristic, to this effect: "that the duke ought to extricate himself from the false position in which Sir Robert Peel had placed him; that he ought not to be a party to measures, which would destroy the gentry, the aristocracy, and the monarchy, but should withdraw from the administration, leaving Sir Robert Peel, and Lord John Russell to work together. In this case," the letter goes on to say, "while you command an army of observation, they will find themselves unable to effect much mischief, and will certainly not succeed in carrying repeal." The following was the duke's reply:—

"Though there is no more sincere well-wisher to the existing corn laws and the sliding scale than myself, and though I have done, and shall continue to do, everything in my power to maintain them, the position which I have taken up is not the corn laws. My object is to maintain a government in the country. For that I have always contended, and always will contend. I am very sensible that any influence which I may possess, any good which I may aid in doing, any evil which I may contribute to avert, must depend upon the kindness and good opinion of my friends. Such influence may easily be written, or cried, or even talked down. So be it; I cannot avoid the evil. But I positively and distinctly decline to take a step, which must have the effect of dissolving the government, of which the dissolution must be followed by the loss of corn laws and everything else.

"I will not attempt to reason upon the hypothetical views which you take of Sir Robert Peel's propositions. I hope soon to see what they are. In the meantime I endeavour to prevail upon those who desire to learn, or are willing to read, or to listen in conversation to my opinions, to wait and see what Peel will propose, before they decide upon the course which they shall take when his proposals see the light. This would be reasonable in any course, except, perhaps, in one involving party politics."

How these negotiations and contests ended, all the world

knows. Sir Robert Peel brought forward and carried in the House of Commons a bill for the repeal of the corn laws. He retained office till this bill passed the House of Lords, and then, being defeated on another measure, he resigned. Once more the great Conservative party fell to pieces, and once more the duke set himself to the task, at that moment apparently hopeless, of reuniting it. He addressed himself to Lord Stanley, now Earl of Derby, as the person most fitted from talent, influence, and position, to accomplish that great work. The subjoined correspondence will show in what temper this negotiation was carried on.

"St. James's Square, *18th Feb.*, 1846.

"My dear Duke,—The kindness with which you have always spoken to me on public matters since we became members of the same government, and especially what fell from you the other night at Apsley House, induces me to address you with a frankness and unreserve which our relative positions would hardly justify in circumstances less critical than those in which the country is now placed. We cannot disguise from ourselves that the unfortunate measure now under consideration has, for the time at least, completely dislocated and shattered the great Conservative party in both Houses, and that the sacrifice of your own private opinion, which you and others have made for the purpose of keeping it together, has failed, as I feared it would, to effect your object. You may remember my appealing to Sir Robert Peel himself in the cabinet, to confirm my statement, that if his measure were carried, it would be by the aid of the whole body of his opponents, and the lukewarm support of a few of his friends, against the angry opposition of the great mass of the Conservative party. It is evident that these anticipations have been realised to the fullest extent, and I think it very doubtful whether even your great name and influence will induce the Lords to sanction the bill, especially if the majority in the House of Commons be not far greater than seems now to be anticipated. I am obliged to add frankly, that I think confidence has been so shaken in Sir Robert Peel, that in spite of his pre-eminent abilities and great services, he can never reunite that party under his guidance. Nor do I at present see any one in the House of Commons of sufficient ability and influence to do so; yet it is clear that if the party is to be efficient, in office or out of office, but especially in office, it must have leaders of eminence in that House. In the House of Lords the case is widely different. There your influence and

authority are and must be paramount, and much as many of your followers may regret the course which a sense of duty has led you to take on this occasion, they will still regard you with undiminished personal respect and attachment; and while you are at their head, will follow no other leader, if any were ill-judged enough to set himself up in opposition to you. And this leads me to speak with entire unreserve of my own position, to which you referred in such kind terms the other evening. I will not affect to deny that my wish to be removed to the Upper House was influenced in great measure by my desire to assist you as a colleague, and to take a portion of the weight of public business off your shoulders;—nor that I looked forward to making myself so known to the members of that House as to qualify me in some degree to act as your successor whenever you should yourself desire to be relieved from the burthens of office. But when, with that disregard of yourself which you have shown throughout your life, you advise that I should now endeavour to rally the Conservative party, I am forced to remind you that in the present state of affairs and feelings they could only be so rallied in opposition to the measures of your own government. I may be compelled by a strong sense of the impolicy of the present measures to give my vote against them; but I have resisted, and I shall continue to resist, entreaties that I would take an active part, and put myself at the head of a movement to throw them out. Such a course would be wholly repugnant to my personal feelings, and I think it would not be for the public good, nor even for the ultimate interests of the Conservative party, which I think it would tend rather to disunite than to consolidate. Whatever course, therefore, I may take, I feel it to be for the general advantage, as it is consistent with my own feelings, that it should be the least prominent that circumstances will allow; and above all, that it should be such as to place me as little as I can help in even apparent competition with you. It is very difficult, in the present entangled posture of affairs, even to guess at the course of events; but I must avow my conviction, that whatever be the result of this measure, the days of the present government are numbered, and that the country must again, for a time, be subjected to a Whig Government. And this is the natural course of events, as the overthrow of the present administration will be effected by some Whig majority, aided by the absence of some of the dissatisfied Conservatives in the House of Commons, where alone a defeat will justify the resignation

of the cabinet. The party which succeeds in overthrowing Peel must replace him; and, in the formation of an administration verging on Radicalism, I see the only chance of re-uniting, in opposition, the great Conservative party, and training the House of Commons members of it to the conduct of public business. While the present government lasts, the Conservatives will be disunited and discontented. If it were possible, which I think it is not, to form a Protection Government now, they would be separated from that section of the party which has adhered to Peel; but, in opposition, both sections would again rally, forgetting past differences, and, in our House, following as readily as before your lead, so long as you are able and willing to give them the benefit of your counsel and guidance. It is possible that I may hereafter be called on to take a more active part, and though my personal wishes would lead me to withdraw as much as possible from politics, I suppose that, like others, I must obey the call; but at present I can do little but harm by putting myself forward; and if I have been unable to prevent a separation of party, which I deplore, I will not do anything to widen that separation, and make the present unhappy breach irreparable.

"I am sure, my dear duke, that you will forgive me for having spoken of these matters as openly as if you and I were only spectators, with no personal interest in the issue. Your frankness has encouraged mine, and I am quite confident that the public good is the main consideration which influences both of us. If you desire to see me on the state of public affairs, I will readily obey your call; but after what you have said to me, I have thought it best that you should be fully aware of the view which I am disposed to take, and of the consideration by which my course, so far as I can yet judge of it, is likely to be influenced. Believe me, my dear duke,

"Yours very sincerely,

"STANLEY.

"His Grace the Duke of Wellington, K.G., etc."

"*February* 19.

"MY DEAR LORD STANLEY,—I did not receive your letter till I returned home yesterday evening; and having been under the necessity of dining with the members of the cabinet at the Duke of Buccleugh's, I can only now write an answer to it. I am much flattered by the confidence which you repose in me; and I will write to you with as little reserve, relying with

confidence that what passes between us will be communicated only by the consent of both.

"You are aware how anxious I have been throughout these discussions, commencing in October last, to preserve and maintain the administration of Sir Robert Peel, for the sake of the queen's ease; knowing what he had performed,—the restoration of the finance of the country; the settlement of the banking system; the revival of commerce; the settlement of this very corn question, and his defence of what had been settled; the success in Ireland in putting down the monster meetings; the universal tranquillity prevailing throughout Great Britain; the confidence which there was felt in his government abroad, and even in the United States. To this, add the confidence in him and respect for him felt in the great manufacturing and commercial towns of the country, such as Manchester, Liverpool, Bristol, etc.

"I felt that he deserved, if he did not possess, the entire confidence of both Houses of Parliament, and I attributed his want of it, particularly in the House of Commons, very much to his omission to make use of the majority which he had at his disposition.

"I am very much afraid that the confidence of parliament has vanished, and that there is no chance of its revival; on the contrary, I am convinced that if his opponents in either House were to move a vote of want of confidence in him, it would pass in the Commons by a large majority,—and would be opposed in the House of Lords only by you and myself, and his and my colleagues, a few in the queen's household, and very few personal friends of his, and relations and personal friends of mine.

"This is a sad change, and I am very apprehensive that there is no prospect of an improvement. That which I look for therefore is, the holding together in other hands the great, and at this moment powerful, Conservative party; and this for the sake of the queen, of the religious and other ancient institutions of the country, of its resources, influence, and power; all necessary for its prosperity, and the contentment and happiness of the people. It is quite obvious that I am not the person who can pretend to undertake, with any chance of success, to perform this task. It is not easy to account for my being in the situation which I have so long filled in the House of Lords. Its commencement was merely accidental. I was commander-in-chief of the army, and master-general of the ordnance, when

Lord Liverpool was struck by palsy; and although I had not, I believe, once spoken in parliament for twenty years, I at once succeeded to the influence and power which he had for many years exercised in the House of Lords, always in high office; which, however unworthily, I have held ever since, whether in or out of office. But circumstances have for a length of time tended to bring the exercise of this influence to a termination, as I will show you in this letter, and I will likewise show you that if it has not already terminated, it must terminate in a very short period of time.

"You will see, therefore, that the stage is entirely clear and open for you, and that notwithstanding that I am, thank God, in as good health as I was twenty years ago, I am as much out of your way, as you contemplated the possibility that I might be when you desired to be removed to the House of Lords.

"I think that you were quite right in doing so; and I rejoiced, and still more now rejoice, that you did so.

"For many years, indeed from the year 1830, when I retired from office, I have endeavoured to manage the House of Lords upon the principle on which I conceive that the institution exists in the constitution of the country, that of Conservatism. I have invariably objected to all violent and extreme measures, which is not exactly the mode of acquiring influence in a political party in England, particularly one in opposition to government. I have invariably supported government in parliament upon important occasions, and have always exercised my personal influence to prevent the mischief of anything like a difference or division between the two Houses,—of which there are some remarkable instances, to which I will advert here, as they will tend to show you the nature of my management, and possibly, in some degree, account for the extraordinary power which I have for so many years exercised, without any apparent claim to it.

"Upon finding the difficulties in which the late King William was involved by a promise made to create peers, the number, I believe, indefinite, I determined myself, and I prevailed upon others, the number very large, to be absent from the House in the discussion of the last stages of the Reform Bill, after the negotiations had failed for the formation of a new administration.

"This course gave at the time great dissatisfaction to the party; notwithstanding that I believe it saved the existence of the House of Lords at the time, and the constitution of the country.

"Subsequently, throughout the period from 1835 to 1841, I prevailed upon the House of Lords to depart from many principles and systems which they as well as I had adopted and voted, on Irish tithes, Irish corporations, and other measures, much to the vexation and annoyance of many. But I recollect one particular measure, the union of the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, in the early stages of which I had spoken in opposition to the measure, and had protested against it; and in the last stages of it I prevailed upon the House to agree to, and pass it, in order to avoid the injury to the public interests of a dispute between the Houses upon a question of such importance.

"Then I supported the measures of the government, and protected the servant of the government, Captain Elliot, in China. All of which tended to weaken my influence with some of the party; others, possibly a majority, might have approved of the course which I took.

"It was at the same time well known that, from the commencement at least of Lord Melbourne's Government, I was in constant communication with it, upon all military matters, whether occurring at home or abroad, at all events. But likewise upon many others.

"All this tended, of course, to diminish my influence in the Conservative party, while it tended essentially to the ease and satisfaction of the sovereign, and to the maintenance of good order. At length came the resignation of the government by Sir Robert Peel, in the month of December last, and the queen desiring Lord John Russell to form an administration.

"On the 12th of December, the queen wrote to me the letter of which I enclose the copy, and the copy of my answer of the same date; of which it appears that you have never seen copies, although I communicated them immediately to Sir Robert Peel.

"It was impossible for me to act otherwise than is indicated in my letter to the queen. I am the servant of the crown and people. I have been paid and rewarded, and I consider myself retained; and that I can't do otherwise than serve as required, when I can do so without dishonour, that is to say, as long as I have health and strength to enable me to serve.

"But it is obvious that there is, and there must be, an end of all connection and counsel between party and me. I might with consistency, and some may think that I ought to, have declined to belong to Sir Robert Peel's cabinet on the night of

the 20th of December. But my opinion is, that, if I had, Sir Robert Peel's government would not have been framed; that we should have had —— and —— in office next morning.

"But, at all events, it is quite obvious that when that arrangement comes, which sooner or later must come, there will be an end to all influence on my part over the Conservative party, if I should be so indiscreet as to attempt to exercise any. You will see, therefore, that the stage is quite clear for you, and that you need not apprehend the consequences of differing in opinion from me when you will enter upon it; as in truth I have, by my letter to the queen of the 12th of December, put an end to the connection between the party and me, when the party will be in opposition to Her Majesty's government.

"My opinion is, that the great object of all is that you should assume the station, and exercise the influence, which I have so long exercised in the House of Lords.

"The question is, how is that object to be attained? By guiding their opinion and decision, or by following it?

"You will see that I have endeavoured to guide their opinion, and have succeeded upon some most remarkable occasions. But it has been by a good deal of management.

"Upon the important occasion and question now before the House, I propose to endeavour to induce them to avoid to involve the country in the additional difficulties of a difference of opinion, possibly a dispute, between the Houses, on a question in the decision of which it has been frequently asserted tnat their lordships had a personal interest; which assertion, however false as affecting each of them personally, could not be denied as affecting the proprietors of land in general.

"I am aware of the difficulty, but I don't despair of carrying the bill through.

"You must be the best judge of the course which you ought to take, and of the course most likely to conciliate the confidence of the House of Lords.

"My opinion is, that you should advise the House to vote that which would tend most to public order, and would be most beneficial to the immediate interests of the country.

"But do what you may, it will make no difference to me; you will always find me aiding and co-operating in the road of good order, Conservatism, and government; and doing every thing to establish and maintain your influence in the Conservative party, which my position may enable me to do.

"I am certain that the establishment of that influence, and

your success in keeping the party united, are essential to the ease of the queen, the maintenance of the religious and other institutions of the country, and the promotion of its best interest.

"I have to observe upon only one other point referred to in your letter, that is, the formation of another administration, which I have always considered as referable to the sovereign alone. I concur in opinion with you, that the difference in the Conservative party, arising out of the existing state of affairs, must be reconciled by a period of joint opposition to a Whig Government. But if you should succeed, as I feel confident you will, in rallying round you the Conservative party in the House of Lords, I submit to you, that if you should be required by the sovereign to form a government, you should not decline without taking time to consider of the proposition, and for inquiry as to the means of forming a government in the House of Commons, and the support which the Conservative party would give you there.

"Protection to agriculture is out of the question. I have considered the corn law of 1841 and 1842 to be at an end since the day on which Sir Robert Peel resigned his office, and recommended to the queen to form another government. He never could return into parliament and retain that law, and I did not, and do not, see in the House persons capable of retaining it. I shall be happy to go to you or to receive you here at any time you please. In the meantime this letter will show you exactly how I stand, and what I mean to do in the measures now under consideration."

It is not to be supposed that the duke corresponded during this great crisis exclusively with members of either House of Parliament, or with men who filled then, or had formerly filled, conspicuous places in the administration of the country. As had occurred during the agitation of the Reform Bill, every individual, high or low, who conceived that he had excogitated a new idea, wrote to explain it to the duke. It appeared, indeed, as if, to use his own expression, the whole British people, regarding him as public property, considered that his time, as well as his purse, was at everybody's disposal. He had begun, however, before this, as the following extracts from his letters will show, to cut short such volunteer advisers. A great admirer of the sliding scale wrote from Bristol, on the 2nd of March, to say, that he had discovered a strong reason, not as yet adduced in either House, why the existing laws should be

maintained. It amounted to this, that as foreign corn might be imported at an expense of at least 21s. per quarter below what was required to raise wheat at home, a few corn merchants, by combining together, could so operate upon the market as to throw the whole, or three-fourths, of English wheat-growing land out of cultivation. The duke answered the communication thus:—

"Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments. He has received, and returns thanks, for Mr. ——'s letter of the 2nd inst. He begs leave to decline to correspond with any gentleman on any subject which either is or may become the subject of discussion in Her Majesty's cabinet or in the House of Parliament of which he is a member."

Another gentleman, equally zealous on the opposite side, had addressed to him, on the 13th of February, from Birmingham, an earnest and, as the writer doubtless imagined, an eloquent appeal on behalf of free trade to the largest extent. It was answered in these terms:—

"Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to ——, and has received his letter. He begs leave to decline to correspond with any gentlemen on subjects under the consideration of Her Majesty's cabinet or in parliament."

He was a little more discursive in his rejoinder to a third stranger, who, writing from Wolverhampton, called his attention to certain errors, real or imaginary, in one of Sir Robert Peel's speeches:—

"Field Marshal the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to ——. He is the commander-in-chief of the army, but he has no control over, or connection with, Sir Robert Peel's speeches in parliament—above all, not with their correction or criticism. He recommends that —— should address the gentleman who made the error, and not one who had nothing to do with the speech, and knows nothing about it."

CHAPTER XLI

THE DUKE IN PRIVATE LIFE—HIS PECULIARITIES—HIS FRIENDS—MR. ARBUTHNOT—HIS HABITS—HIS ANXIETY ON THE SUBJECT OF NATIONAL DEFENCES—HIS LAST ILLNESS, DEATH, AND FUNERAL

We have now to follow the great duke into private life; into a manner of life as private, at least, as was consistent with the due performance of the many official duties which still devolved upon him, and with the regular demands of the House of Lords upon his attendance, which he never omitted to render. His time he appears to have divided pretty much as he had done for many years previously, residing during the parliamentary session in London, and spending the recess partly at Strathfieldsaye, partly at Walmer. It was one of his amiable peculiarities, that whatever happened to be his own possessed great attractions in his eyes. Strathfieldsaye, a commodious house of the date of Queen Anne, but in an architectural point of view certainly not an imposing structure, he regarded as one of the best in England. Of Walmer Castle he often said, that it was "the most charming marine residence he had ever seen—that the queen herself had nothing to be compared with it." And Apsley House, as it had been rebuilt under his own superintendence, so it was, according to his view of such matters, without a defect. His pictures, his statuary, his furniture, his horses, and his carriages, were all regarded in the same light. Of these latter, there was one which was in special favour with him, and which he valued the more because it owed its peculiar shape to his own ingenuity. Originally a cabriolet, he had prefixed to it a driving seat, by means of which it became a phaeton, having the perch of more than ordinary length, and the four wheels all of the same diameter. It was in this vehicle that, during the last years of his life, he was accustomed, in bad weather, to drive to and from the Horse Guards, and he spoke of it as the most comfortable and convenient of all his carriages.

Another of the duke's peculiarities was, that though retaining to the last a warm regard for his old companions in arms, he

entered very little with them, after he became a politician, into the amenities of social life. There is reason to believe that neither Lord Hill nor Sir George Murray ever visited the duke at Strathfieldsaye; nor could they or others of similar standing, such as Lord Anglesey, Sir Edward Paget, and Sir James Kempt, be reckoned among the *habitués* of his hospitable gatherings in Apsley House. The circle in which he chiefly moved was that of fashionable ladies and gentlemen, who pressed themselves upon him, and were flattered, as indeed they had much reason to be, with the notice which he took of them, and by his presence at their parties. At the same time, the duke knew perfectly well how to draw the line, even within that circle, between intimacy and mere acquaintanceship. From the friends of his youth he never withdrew the attachment which first brought them together, and among connections of later growth, there were some which he valued very highly.

Of his old friends, none, perhaps, shared his confidence more fully than the late Mr. John Wilson Croker and Mr. Charles Arbuthnot. With the former, his acquaintance began when he was Irish Secretary, and it continued uninterrupted to the day of his death. It was, however, a wise confidence which the duke gave. He relished Mr. Croker's society, because of the great extent of that gentleman's knowledge, and his varied powers of conversation. But he was not blind to the failings of the ex-Secretary to the Admiralty; and used to enjoy nothing more than seeing him, as occasionally happened, tripped up in an argument. Mr. Croker was one of his most regular correspondents, especially in seasons of political perplexity. The duke did not always number him, on such occasions, among the most judicious of his advisers.

From Mr. Arbuthnot, on the other hand, he seems never to have kept back a thought. Mild and gentle in his deportment, that gentleman possessed, in no common degree, the quality of discretion; and gave himself up so entirely to the duke and his concerns, as to postpone to them all apparent consideration of his own. He reaped his reward in such a measure of confidence and affection as were not bestowed upon any other human being. Latterly, indeed, after both had become widowers, Mr. Arbuthnot occupied apartments in Apsley House, and was the duke's constant companion for a portion, at least, of the months which he passed in the country, as well at Walmer as at Strathfieldsaye. It was touching to witness the regard of these old men, one for the other; especially to observe the

degree of tenderness with which the duke watched over the comforts of his friend. Though nearly of the same age, Mr. Arbuthnot was physically more infirm than the duke, and the duke knew it. Hence, after they had walked together for a while, in an autumnal evening, on the beach beneath the castle, the duke would stop short and say: "Now, Arbuthnot, you've been out long enough. The dew is falling, and you'll catch cold; you must go in." And like a child obeying the behests of its mother or its nurse, Arbuthnot, not always without a brief remonstrance, would leave the duke to continue his walk alone, and withdraw into the castle.

Having touched upon this matter, I may as well sacrifice chronological order, and bring my narrative of the friendship of the two men to an end. Mr. Arbuthnot, after living with the duke for many years, was at last seized with the malady under which he sank. Dr. Ferguson was sent for, and having carefully examined his patient, made a report to the duke, that the case was hopeless. They were sitting together in that back room which the duke usually occupied, and which, as it still continues in the state in which he left it, so let us hope that it will be retained in the same condition while Apsley House shall endure. The duke drew his chair close to Ferguson's, in order that he might hear; and when the doom was uttered, he seized the doctor's hand, and rubbing it between his own, and gazing into Ferguson's face, exclaimed in a broken voice, "No, no; he's not very ill, not very bad,—he'll get better. It's only his stomach that's out of order. He'll not die." But he did die, in spite of all the nursing which the duke personally bestowed upon him, and the eagerness with which he clung to every symptom which could by any means be accepted as favourable.

Mr. Arbuthnot was buried in Kensal Green, and the duke attended his funeral. While the service was read, the hero of a hundred fights sat wrapped in his mourning cloak, with tears streaming down his cheeks. There is a custom there, for which the duke was evidently not prepared. At that stage in the service, when the clergyman reads the words, "earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes," the coffin is made, by machinery, to sink slowly under the floor of the chapel. The duke, when he saw the coffin begin to sink, gave a start. He watched it with intense apparent interest till it disappeared; but he could not be persuaded to descend afterwards into the vault. What passed within his mind during that interval, who shall undertake to say? But whatever it might be, it stayed his tears,

and sent him back, calm and collected, as soon as the funeral service was over, to the haunts of busy men.

They who never visited the duke at Strathfieldsaye, or at Walmer, can form no accurate conception of his qualities as a private member of society. At both places, but especially at the latter, he seemed to lay aside all the conventionalities of life, as it passes in the capital. He was perfectly at ease himself, and leaving his guests to do as they preferred, he placed them at their ease also. His general habits, to which he adhered to the last, may be thus described.

He rose early, and read and wrote till ten o'clock. At ten, breakfast was served, after which he withdrew again to his own room, where he remained till about two in the afternoon. He then joined his friends, rode or drove out with them, or walked, as the case might be, making himself most agreeable to all who approached him. A pack of hounds was kept in the neighbourhood, with which he frequently hunted, mounting any lady or gentleman who, not having brought horses with them, desired to see the sport. At seven he dined. The duke ate but twice a day, at breakfast and dinner. Though not a large feeder he ate fast, and had an excellent appetite. He was never given to much wine, and in later years found it advisable to cease from the use of it altogether. But the hospitalities of his table were generous. His conversation also, till deafness grew upon him, was lively and instructive, and at table he made it as general as possible. About nine, or occasionally later, he would say, "Will anybody have any more wine?" and then rise and propose to go to the drawing-room for coffee. It was a peculiarity of his that he always led the way on these occasions, the ladies having, *more Anglicano*, retired somewhat earlier. In the drawing-room he sat usually in an arm-chair near the fireplace, and chatted with such of his guests as drew near him. There was a total absence of restraint, for every one present felt that he was at liberty to do as he pleased. Cards were never introduced at Walmer, though sometimes at Strathfieldsaye, but books and newspapers lay on all tables, and the conversation rarely flagged. About eleven the ladies usually retired, and half an hour afterwards the duke would light his candle and say, "I am going to bed; whoever leaves the room last will ring for the lights to be put out."

The duke was an excellent sleeper, indeed he seemed to have the faculty of sleeping whenever he chose, and it was an unbroken slumber with him, when in health, from the time he

laid his head on the pillow till he rose again. It is said of him, that when one of his lady friends expressed surprise that he should continue to make use of a bed on which there was no room to turn, his answer was, "When one begins to turn in bed it is time to get up."

The duke's conversation was of the most varied kind. He read a great deal, and forgot nothing. His favourite authors were Clarendon, Bishop Butler, Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Hume, the Archduke Charles, Gibbon, Leslie, and the Bible. But he did not confine himself to these. Every new work of any merit which came out, he read; and he was especially interested in French and English memoirs, and what our neighbours call "materials for history." Nor was he obliged to go far in search of this intellectual pabulum. There was scarcely an English author, there was certainly not an English novelist, who failed to send the duke a copy of his book; indeed to such an extent was this habit carried, that he was obliged, at last, to give orders that no parcels of books should be taken in, unless he knew beforehand that they were coming. But he was peculiar in his reading, as in other things.

It chanced, on one occasion, that he was in want, when at Walmer, of a new book. Niebuhr's History was recommended to him; and he began it. He read on till he reached the narrative of Cæsar's cruelty to his prisoners; and there shut the book. Nothing could induce him to go further. This was too much. He would not have his idols so thrown down.

The duke did not approve of the habitual, and therefore common-place, discussion of sacred subjects, but as often as they were introduced, you might perceive by his change of manner, that he felt himself to be upon holy ground. Of the Lord's Prayer he used to say, that "it contained the sum total of religion and of morals." But the greatest enjoyment to his friends was when they could get him to discuss his own campaigns. When asked which of the French marshals he considered the best officer? he replied, "Massena; I always found him where I least desired that he should be." Of the campaign of Salamanca he spoke as of "the most perfect piece of manœuvring which the world had seen since the times of Frederick the Great." Soult he respected, but observed, "though his plans seemed always to be admirable, he never knew when to strike." His opinion of Napoleon was a very mixed one. He considered him "a great man, but also a great actor." And here I may insert an anecdote, which, though it

be not immediately connected with his daily proceedings at Walmer, may tend to illustrate the subject of which I am speaking.

On the 8th of December, 1825, the following persons met at Teddesley, the seat of Lord Hatherton, then Mr. Littleton; the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Richard and Lady Harriet Bagot, Mr. Peel, Mr. Croker, Mr. George Fortescue, Mr. and Mrs. Foster Cunliffe, and Mr. and Mrs. Littleton. After dinner the conversation turned on the Waterloo campaign, when Croker alluded to the criticisms of the French military writers, some of whom contended that the duke had fought the battle in a position full of danger, because he had no practicable retreat. The duke said, "At all events, they failed in putting it to the test. The road to Brussels was, however, practicable, every yard, for such a purpose. I knew every foot of the plain beyond the forest and through it. The forest on each side of the chaussée was open enough to infantry, cavalry, and even to artillery, and very defensible. Had I retreated through it, could they have followed me? The Prussians were on their flank, and would have been in their rear. The co-operation of the Prussians in the operations I undertook was part of my plan, and I was not deceived. But I never contemplated a retreat on Brussels. Had I been forced from my position, I should have retreated to my right, towards the coast, the shipping, and my resources. I had placed Hill where he could have lent me important assistance in many contingencies, and that might have been one. And again I ask, if I had retreated on my right, would Napoleon have ventured to follow me? The Prussians, already on his flank, would have been in his rear. But my plan was to keep my ground till the Prussians appeared, and then to attack the French position; and I executed my plan." On quitting the room, Croker remarked that he had never heard the duke say as much on that subject before.

It was not, however, exclusively by dealing with great matters like this, that the duke delighted his auditors. When speaking of his own wars he had numberless stories to tell, both of individuals and of corps, some of them very ludicrous—all of them deeply interesting. For example, he used to say of his old aide-de-camp, Sir Colin Campbell, who died at last Lieut.-Governor of Plymouth, a man gallant, trustworthy, and naturally intelligent, "that he knew no language except his own, and that not very correctly. I had a French cook in Spain, and Colin had charge of my domestic affairs. The *batterie* was

not, as you may suppose, very perfect, and the cook came to Colin to complain. Neither understood a word of what the other was saying, but I overheard this pass between them. 'Mais, monsieur, comment travailler?' 'Travel!' said Colin, 'why you travel in a coach!' On another occasion when we were in St. Jean de Luz, I had the mayor and all the magnates to dine with me. In going away the mayor took up an umbrella which belonged to Colin, upon which Colin seized the other end of it, took it away, and said with a low bow, 'C'est *moine*.'"

Speaking of the battle of Vimeira, the duke observed, "The French came on, on that occasion, with great boldness, and seemed to feel their way less than I always found them do afterwards. They came on, as usual, in very heavy columns, and I received them in line, which they were not accustomed to, and we repulsed them three several times."

Referring to the advance from the Douro to the Ebro, the duke stated that "he got famously taken in on one occasion." "The troops had taken to plundering a good deal. It was necessary to stop it, and I issued an order announcing that the first man caught in the act should be hanged upon the spot. One day, just as we were sitting down to dinner, three men were brought to the door of the tent by the prevôt. The case against them was clear, and I had nothing for it but to desire that they should be led away, and hanged in some place where they might be seen by the whole column in its march next day. I had a good many guests with me on that occasion, and among the rest, I think, Lord Nugent. They seemed dreadfully shocked, and could not eat their dinner. I didn't like it much myself, but, as I told them, I had no time to indulge my feelings, I must do my duty. Well, the dinner went off rather gravely, and next morning, sure enough, three men in uniform were seen hanging from the branches of a tree close to the high road. It was a terrible example, and produced the desired effect; there was no more plundering. But you may guess my astonishment, when some months afterwards I learned, that one of my staff took counsel with Dr. Hume, and as three men had just died in hospital, they hung them up, and let the three culprits return to their regiments." "Weren't you very angry, duke?" was the question. "Well, I suppose I was at first; but as I had no wish to take the poor fellows' lives, and only wanted the example, and as the example had the desired effect, my anger soon died out, and I confess to you that I am very glad now that the three lives were spared."

Though free in discussing the merits of those to whom he had been opposed, the duke was delicate in giving any opinion respecting the military abilities of the officers who served under him. Being pressed on one occasion to say which among them all he considered to be his most promising pupil, he replied, "That is not a fair question; it is not for me to answer it. Wait till they have opportunities of showing what they can do, and then you will find out." "But was not Moore a first-rate officer?" "Moore was no pupil of mine, he was as brave as his own sword; but he did not know what men could do or could not do." "And Hope?" "I entertained a high opinion of Hope; he served but a short time with me, but I found him to be very intelligent." "And Hardinge?" "Well, Hardinge is a very clever fellow." Beyond this the duke could never be prevailed upon to go.

Both at Strathfieldsaye and Walmer, the duke was a regular attendant at public worship, and received the sacrament as often as it was administered. It was a touching sight to see that great and venerable man, kneeling devoutly before the altar rails of the village church, with the sunlight falling through the stained glass upon his head, and his own attention fixed entirely upon the act in which he was participating. He was not always so attentive during the sermon. Indeed, unless the preacher were eloquent, or the subject out of the common, he used generally to gather himself up into the corner of the pew and go to sleep; when he sometimes snored audibly. He was very particular also in requiring that his guests should attend divine service somewhere. It happened on one occasion that Count Nugent, an Irish gentleman, but an Austrian general, paid him a visit at Walmer Castle. Sunday morning came, and the count said, "Duke, do you go to church?" "Always; don't you?" "I can't go to church with you, for you know I'm a Catholic." "Oh, very well," was the answer; upon which he turned to Captain Watts, who happened to be in the room, and said, "Count Nugent wants to go to the Roman Catholic chapel, do you know where it is?" "Yes, sir," replied Watts. "Then be so good as to show him the way." It was to no purpose that Count Nugent tried to escape. Captain Watts, an old Peninsular officer, had received his instructions, and instructions from the Duke of Wellington must be obeyed, and to the Roman Catholic chapel the count was accordingly marched. The duke was a good deal tickled, and in walking to church with his Protestant friends observed, "I knew he

did not want me to go to church, nor to go himself either. but I thought it best that we should both go."

And here, though somewhat out of place, I may be permitted to detail an anecdote which does equal credit to the venerable prelate who administered the advice, and to the great warrior and statesman who took it in such excellent part.

After one of those severe attacks of illness which from time to time laid him prostrate, and awakened the sympathies of the whole nation, the duke received a letter from the present Bishop of Exeter, which not only expressed his lively satisfaction at the duke's recovery, but called the duke's attention to the fact that, before the Author of all, human greatness is nothing; and that it would be especially becoming in one who had achieved, like himself, the highest pitch of glory, if he publicly evinced his reverence for God and for religion. That letter, with the duke's reply, well deserved to be published at length; but for the present it may suffice to state that the duke thanked his monitor for the advice so kindly given, and entered into a long and most satisfactory statement of his own religious principles and practices. He was neither the careless nor the profligate man which the world represented him to be. Wherever his example was likely to tell, he attended public worship regularly; and would do so in London also, except that he had ceased for years to catch a word that was said. He used to be present at the early morning service in the Chapel Royal, till he found that in winter he could no longer do so, without getting laid up with cold. No man knew better, no man felt more keenly than he, the nothingness of human power and glory; and if he did not trust, as the bishop advised him to do, he could have no hope at all for the future.

The duke never appeared so fretful and dissatisfied as when the French and English squadrons, which were about to blockade the Scheldt, cast anchor together in the Downs. It seemed to him an unnatural state of things that England should ally herself with France, in order to dismember a kingdom which she had been mainly instrumental in consolidating, with a view to keep France in check. He did not, however, allow his feelings to over-ride his habitual good breeding and hospitality. He invited the commanders of both squadrons to the castle, though he was probably not sorry that the state of the weather would not permit the French admiral to land.

The duke was very proud of his eyesight, which indeed

continued to be remarkably good and clear to the last. He has been heard to say that he was able to distinguish the nationality of flags passing up and down channel, at distances which made them perfectly unintelligible to others; and he even asserted, and no doubt believed, that at night he could, from the ramparts of the castle, see the lights in the town of Calais. This, assuming the distance to be what geographers make it, was, I suspect, impossible; but there is no doubt that the duke could, at eighty-three years of age, read in the open air a well-written manuscript without using spectacles.

The duke's fondness for children was great; and he was, as might be expected, strongly attached to his own grandchildren, the children of his son, Lord Charles. One of these was taken ill when on a visit at Walmer, and the duke's anxiety about the little sufferer knew no limits.

But the feeling was not new with him, as it sometimes is with men who, for the first time, come under its influence when they are well stricken in years. Though never demonstrative, under any circumstances, and, through the press of constant business, cut off from indulging much in pastime with his sons, he was extremely fond of them, and took the deepest and the truest interest in their early training and education. The Rev. H. M. Wagner, vicar of Brighton, became tutor to the present duke, then Marquis of Douro, and to Lord Charles Wellesley, in 1817; and in a private letter, which he has kindly permitted me to use, he thus describes his first interview with their illustrious father:—

"In 1817, when the duke sent for me to go to him at Mont St. Martin, the head-quarters of the army of occupation, at the very first interview he told me his intention was that 'his boys should serve the king.' He desired that they might be brought up as Christian gentlemen, in all singleness and simplicity, every consideration being postponed to that of duty. The interest which he took in their education may, in a manner, be exemplified by a single fact. During a period of seven years that I was with the Marquis of Douro and Lord Charles Wellesley, he (the duke) never failed to answer by the very first post any inquiry or letter connected with the well-being of his sons. No matter what were the duke's occupations, whether *en route* for the inspection of the fortresses in the Low Countries; whether at the Congress of Verona, or on a special mission to St. Petersburg, he invariably answered my letters touching his sons by

the first post; and the same exactitude prevailed in the transmission of money for the payment of bills at Eton and elsewhere. On this head, indeed, he was always most particular; and he did his best to stamp the same character of punctuality on the moral being of his sons. He laid it down as a rule for their guidance at Eton, that they should purchase nothing for which they had not in their pockets the means of paying. The enclosed letter to myself, written after the young men had entered the university, sets this matter in the clearest point of view."

"HATFIELD, *10th October*, 1824.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of the 7th, to which I proceed to give an answer; and I request you to communicate it to my sons, which will save both me and them trouble.

"After all the inquiries which I have made, I believe that the allowance which they ought to have, and which would go nearest to provide for their education at Oxford, excluding a private tutor, but including everything else, would be for Douro, who will be entered as a nobleman, £800 per annum, including his half-pay; and for Charles, who will be entered as a gentleman commoner, £500 per annum, besides his half-pay. I therefore, by this post, direct Messrs. Coutts to pay Douro £200, and Charles £125, on the 1st October, 1st January, 1st April, and 1st July, each year, beginning with the 1st inst.

"I beg that Charles will observe that I make him this allowance, at present, in order that he may defray the expenses of his education. He must recollect, however, that he is only a younger brother, and that it is not at all clear that he will ever have so much again, unless he should make it by his own industry and talent; and I beg you will tell them both that when I entered the world I had just the sum for the whole year which I now give Charles every quarter.

"I intend that these allowances shall cover all expenses of every description; and I have reason to believe them so ample that I expect they will not run in debt; particularly as I begin by paying them in advance, and as I will take upon myself the following expenses:—

"The entrance fees at the college and university for both.

"The expenses of the nobleman's and gentleman-commoner's gowns.

"They must pay for the furniture of their rooms themselves, but if you should think the expense too heavy upon them

immediately, I would advance the money, and they can repay me hereafter.

"I give them the horses which they now have with them, of which they may dispose as they may think proper; and they may take any servants they please out of my house or stables, they, of course, paying their wages, and also their expenses, from the time of their leaving me.

"Accordingly, if you let me know what the entrance-money is, and the expense of the gowns, I will send you the money.

"I beg you to impress upon them that there is but one certain and infallible way of avoiding debt, that is, first, to determine to incur no expense, to defray which the money is not in their pockets; secondly, to pay the money immediately for everything they get, and for every expense they incur. They will then be certain that everything they have is their own, and they will know at all times what they can and what they cannot do. There is nothing so easy, provided they begin in time; and I give them these ample allowances, and pay them beforehand, purposely that they may at once pay for everything the moment they get it.

"They should, in adopting this system, advert to the expenses of the college, which they have to defray themselves, their servants' wages and clothes, the keep of their horses, and lay by a sufficiency to defray their expenses till the 1st January. The remainder will be their own, and they will lay it out as they please; observing always, that if this remainder is laid out uselessly or idly, and they act up rigidly to the system of paying for everything at the time they get it, they may want clothes or other necessaries, or reasonable gratifications, before the quarter will expire.

"I think it best to remind them of all this, because I hope that they and I will have no further discussion upon these subjects. In respect of their studies, I am very anxious about their mathematics, as essential to those who serve in the army. If you will let me know what the course is in the university, I will give you my opinion upon other matters. They should likewise have a perfect knowledge of modern geography and history, of course, but I shall hear further from you on these points. I will go and see them shortly after they shall have gone to Oxford, where they ought to be on the 14th. They had better probably go to Strathfieldsaye to make their arrangements for their departure, as soon as you will receive this letter.

"I wish you would let each of them keep a copy of this letter, and send me one."

Though not himself a scholar, the duke was remarkably alive to the charm of scholarship, and seemed to value his brother, Lord Wellesley, almost more for his success at Eton than for any of the great deeds which he performed in after years. He was, therefore, very anxious that his sons should excel in all their school and college exercises, and was in the habit of requiring from them weekly reports of their course of study, and of the themes and verses which they wrote. The latter he sent, from time to time, to Lord Wellesley, in order to obtain his corrections and opinion; and on many of the former, which now lie before me, his own remarks in pencil remain. One of Lord Wellesley's answers to these communications from the duke will, I am sure, be read with interest.

"RICHMOND, *2nd May*, 1821.

"MY DEAR ARTHUR,—I was much gratified by your kind attention in sending me the exercises of your sons. I could not answer your letter until I had examined them carefully; they were naturally very interesting to me, and they have afforded me sincere pleasure.

"I assure you that they are superior in a high degree to the ordinary scale of exercises of that class during my time. It was a great satisfaction to me to observe the regular progress of improvement, especially in Douro's exercises, from the first to the last copy of verses. Douro's verses, upon the character of Homer's poetry, are highly creditable, and his four concluding verses of that exercise display considerable spirit and original thought. Tell him from me that the boy who admires Homer must have made great proficiency.

"Charles's exercises are very promising, and I think he has already attained a sense of the harmony of Latin verse. There are two copies marked 'Gerald Wellesley;' I suppose the author is Henry's boy; they are also very creditable for the fourth form.

"I consider these efforts as the true foundation of distinction in the progress of life. Not that I should wish to see your sons distinguished as writers of Latin verses in future times, but these exercises at school are essential to the accurate knowledge of the great fountain of ancient genius, science, and taste, as well as of the ancient examples of virtue, honour, and glory.

The habit of composition in the ancient languages is most useful, if not absolutely necessary, to those who desire completely to understand those languages; at all events, it is useful to employ young persons in acquiring such accomplishments, and it is satisfactory to find that they apply themselves with the zeal and success which these exercises display.

"Always, my dear Arthur,

"Yours most affectionately,

"WELLESLEY.

"*N.B.*—The Latin verses of your boys are much more correct and better in every respect than those published by *the eighth wonder of the world, Master Dallas.*"

There was an order against strangers wandering from the road which leads up to the gate, and getting into the grounds and shrubberies about Walmer Castle. It happened, on one occasion, that a lady, ignorant of the existence of that order, strayed into the paddock with two children, and was, as a matter of course, warned off by one of the servants. The duke rode up just as the warning was administered, and asking what was the matter, received from the lady an account of the mistake which she had committed, with a nervous apology for the same. "Oh, never mind, never mind," was his answer. "You're quite welcome to go where you will. And, by the by, bring the children here to-morrow at one o'clock, and I'll show them all about the place myself."

The lady came, as desired, and was delighted to find that the duke had prepared a dinner for her children, and lunch for herself, with fruit. The young people ate their fill, and the duke, after showing them through the castle, and over the garden, hung a half-sovereign suspended from a blue ribbon round each of their necks, before he sent them away. Without doubt these gold medals will be highly prized, not by the individuals only who wore them on that day, but by their descendants, to many generations, if they have any.

The duke's temper, naturally quick, but in the vigour of his days kept under marvellous control, became more irritable as the infirmities of age grew upon him; and he found it impossible, sometimes, to restrain it. But he never gave way to a burst of passion without regretting it, and showing, if the opportunity offered, by some unmistakable proof, that he had wounded himself more than he had wounded others. This was particu-

larly the case in his dealings with his valet, one of the most faithful domestics that ever waited upon a great man. Take the following example.

The duke's bell sounded very violently, and when the servant entered, he was seen standing beside his table. "What have you done with the book I was reading last night? I laid it there,—just there!" striking the table with his hand, "and you have taken it away. What have you done with it?" "I never saw it, your Grace; I never touched it." "But you must have seen it, and you did touch it; where is it?" And then he would get into a towering passion, and walk up and down the room, blaming everybody, till the servant retired. By and by he would recollect that he had taken it into another room and left it there; upon which he would ring the bell again, and on the servant showing himself, he would ask some ordinary question. The answer being given, he would reply in a tone of marked kindness, "Thank you, I am much obliged to you." The valet perfectly understood that this was as much as if he had said, "I've done you wrong, pray forgive me."

The duke's liberality to persons in distress was unbounded, and, contrary to all precedent, seemed to increase with his years. He subscribed also, but quietly, to many charitable institutions, and especially to orphan asylums, assigning as his reason that he had been the involuntary means of making many orphans, and was therefore bound to do what he could to provide for them. That he was imposed upon continually is quite true, and it is equally true that he was not blind to these acts of imposition; yet they never dried up the springs of his benevolence. One among many instances of the extent to which he suffered himself to be plundered, obtained publicity in consequence of the case having been brought into a police-court; yet we question whether even that has been correctly narrated. It was this:—

A band of noted impostors had for months made the duke their prey. They wrote to him, now, in the character of officers' widows; now, as the daughters of officers; now, as ladies who had fallen from virtue, and were anxious to regain a place in society; and on every occasion he sent them money. At last the duke's valet, whose suspicions had been awakened by the similarity of the handwriting on letters to which registered replies were returned, communicated with the Mendicity Office, and the plot being discovered, the parties to it were arraigned before the magistrate, and committed to prison. We must not

forget to add that the duke never became aware of Kendall's interference in the matter. Had such a discovery been effected, the probabilities are that Kendall's connection with his master would have ceased immediately. And yet the duke used to complain in his private letters of the endless applications that were made to him, and of the spirit which seemed to suggest them, as thus:—

"*September 8th*, 1852.

"It is certainly very curious that every blackguard beggar, male or female, no matter of what country, considers it the right of each to demand money from me; and that every lady or gentleman, whether I am acquainted with them or not, considers that he has a right to demand the service of my power and influence in favour of some relation of the writer, or that, if I have any office, or advantage, or benefit in my gift or at my disposal, the applicant considers himself as exceedingly ill-treated if I do not dispose of the same as he desires. I am certain it is generally understood that I am a good-natured man, who will do anything; and that moreover I have been highly rewarded and am still in the public service, and that everything I have belongs to the public; as certainly would be the case if I were an *emancipated slave*. I cannot otherwise account for the demands made upon me."

Another little anecdote, illustrative of the same fact, may not be uninteresting. Mr. Arbuthnot went one morning into the duke's room, and found him stuffing a handful of bank notes into several envelopes. "What are you doing, duke?" "Doing? Doing what I am obliged to do every day. It would take the wealth of the Indies to meet all the demands that are made upon me."

The duke's hospitality to his neighbours in Walmer, and to the officers of the regiments quartered there and at Dover, was great. Two or three times a week, during his autumnal residence in Kent, he had dinner parties, which all who were present at them enjoyed, because they seemed to be agreeable to their host. He was most particular, too, on such occasions, not to disappoint his guests, even if he should himself be put to inconvenience. It happened, on one occasion, that he invited, as he supposed, all the officers not on duty in Dover Castle to dine with him. Captain Watts, the captain of Walmer Castle, happened to discover that one young officer had been accidentally passed over, and knowing how keen the disappointment to the youth

would be, he ventured to state the circumstance to the Duke. "How many are there to dinner?" was the duke's reply; and when informed that the table would hold an additional guest, he said, "By all means, write and invite him too."

On another day, when the officers from Walmer barracks had been invited, the duke was taken, about four in the afternoon, with one of those fits to which in later years he had become liable. As he was extremely ill, his servants, when he rallied a little, were naturally desirous of putting off the dinner. Captain Watts accordingly went to his bedroom, and made the proposal; but the duke would not hear of it. "Let the dinner go on;" and the dinner did go on, Captain Watts and Dr. M'Arthur doing the honours of the table.

One of the common penalties of greatness the duke was called upon to pay more frequently than perhaps any Englishman of modern times. He sat to painters and sculptors over and over again; and, on the whole, bore the infliction patiently. Once or twice it is recorded that his temper got the better of him; but this befell only when the artist was, or the duke believed him to be, unpunctual in keeping his engagements. Generally speaking, he was composed, and sufficiently in good humour. Among others he sat to Leslie, who had received a royal command to paint the ceremony of the coronation, introducing portraits of the principal persons present. Leslie resided then at Abercorn Place, in one of the districts of St. John's Wood; and the duke, immediately on entering the studio, remarked, "It's a long way to come, Mr. Leslie—five miles." "No, sir," was the answer, "not quite so far as that. But if your Grace finds it inconvenient to come to me, I can easily go to Apsley House." "Very well," replied the duke: and to Apsley House Leslie accordingly went the very next day appointed for a sitting. He was greeted thus: "Well, don't you find it a long way to come—five miles?"

Either on this or some other occasion the duke, after having ascertained how the artist wished him to sit, observed, "Now, mind the shape of my head. It's a square head. I know it, for Chantry told me so."[1]

The single-mindedness of such a remark would excite our astonishment were the story told of any other man than the duke, but that perfect simplicity, which was one of the peculiarities

[1] Haydon's account of his own reception at Walmer Castle will be familiar to all who have read Tom Taylor's biography of that remarkable man.

of his nature, was remarkably illustrated on the occasion of a morning visit which he paid to Mr. Croker, during his temporary sojourn in England at an early stage in the Peninsular war. The municipality of Lisbon, grateful for the deliverance of their country from Junot's army, had requested Sir Arthur Wellesley to sit for his portrait; and, the portrait being afterwards engraved, the words "VICTOR INVICTUS" were printed beneath. Mr. Croker, by some means or another, obtained a copy of this engraving, which he showed to Sir Arthur; whereupon Sir Arthur wrote with his pencil under the motto, "Don't halloo till you're out of the wood." The portrait, with the duke's pencil criticism attached to it, is still, I believe, in Mrs. Croker's possession.

As a landlord, the duke was liberal and very considerate. In order to prevent all ground of clashing between the tenantry, and the incumbent of Strathfieldsaye, he charged himself, long before the bill for the commutation of tithes came into force, with the payment of the latter. He laid out large sums, also, in draining and improving the land, and in rebuilding and putting into complete repair all the farms, homesteads, and cottages on the estate. Indeed, he never applied to his own use one farthing of the rents which accrued from his Hampshire property. "I do this," he observed, "out of consideration for future Dukes of Wellington. I am a rich man, because I have my pay as commander-in-chief, and hold other offices under government. My successor will not have these sources of income, and I therefore consider it my duty to lay by for him all that is not required out of my rents to put and keep the property in perfect order."

Of the duke's rigid integrity an instance occurred in reference to this estate, which is well worth placing on record. Some farm adjoining to his lands was for sale, and his agent negotiated for him the purchase. Having concluded the business, he went to the duke, and told him that he had made a capital bargain. "What do you mean?" asked the duke. "Why, your Grace, I have got the farm for so much, and I know it to be worth at least so much more." "Are you quite sure of that?" "Quite sure, your Grace, for I have carefully surveyed it." "Very well, then, pay the gentleman from me the balance between what you have already given and the real value of the estate;" and it was done.

It is not to be supposed that the duke, though he withdrew himself from the turmoil of party politics, was therefore forgetful

of the wants of the country, or indifferent to them. A subject which had long been present to his mind, now appeared well-nigh to engross it. He considered that England lay at the mercy of any great continental power which possessed a navy, and was willing to run some risks in order to attack her; and looking to the political state of the world, and remembering the occasions on which, since the accession of Louis Philippe, war between France and England seemed imminent, the thought of what might have befallen, and would befall, were some future quarrel to be pushed to an extremity, haunted him like a nightmare. It was a subject on which he not only spoke freely to all who approached him, but about which he communicated in memoranda, and in official and private letters, with almost every member of the government. At last, being requested to make suggestions, he drew up a paper, wherein he sketched a plan for the preparation of works, purely defensive. It cannot be said that his suggestions were entirely disregarded, for ministers acknowledged the receipt of the document with thanks, and submitted it to the usual routine of official criticism. But time passed without any measures of defence being adopted, and by and by the country was electrified by the appearance in *The Times* newspaper of an able and argumentative letter, bearing the duke's signature. Now of all living men, he was known to be the last who would lightly appeal on such a subject to such a tribunal. The effect therefore of his letter to Sir John Burgoyne was prodigious, and though it soon transpired that the MS. had fallen into unsafe hands, the amount of good accomplished by it more than made up for the error of its publication. The people of England believed that they were not safe, and the government set about those necessary arrangements which are still only in progress.

Though the duke had accepted Louis Philippe as head of the French Government, he seems never to have trusted him. Remembering how, in 1815, the Duke of Orleans had plotted to supplant the elder branch of his own family, he gave the citizen king little credit for patriotism in any of his proceedings. And this measure of distrust attained its fulness, when the wretched Spanish marriages were negotiated. He spoke of that transaction as discreditable in itself, and towards England positively dishonest, and he agreed with all who expressed an opinion that England ought to have prevented the consummation of the wrong, even if an appeal to arms had been necessary. But then came the question, was England in a condition to

appeal to arms? "We are not," he wrote, "in a state to risk even the smallest manifestation of angry feeling on this or any other subject. We must first put our country in that reasonable state of defence in which it was put after the seven years' war, in which it was before the French revolutionary war, and in which it ought always to have been kept, particularly in late years; but in which it would almost appear that it had been the object of government in modern times not to place it. The neglect of these necessaries has, in my opinion, been the cause, not only of these late transactions, but of many others. But I for one should regret to see any manifestations of feeling upon these matters, until I should be certain that we could resent the feeling which might be manifested on the other side. These are melancholy topics." [1]

It happened one day, in the autumn of 1846, the duke being then at Walmer, that the conversation at table turned upon certain alarmist articles which had just made their appearance in *The Times*. A good many officers of the garrison were present, when a gentleman, not an officer, put the question, "But, duke, do you really think that an invasion of England from France is possible?" "Possible!" replied the duke, "is anything impossible? Read the newspapers." He said no more while dinner lasted; but when the company had retired to the drawing-room, he took his questioner apart, and entered with him in the fullest manner into the whole subject. "And I'll tell you what," he observed, "the French would have an immense advantage over us, even if we were prepared to oppose a landing, because they would be able to see further and better than we." "How is that?" was the natural question. "Why thus. They start at midnight, and arrive off our coast just before sunrise. The dawn, which renders everything clear to them, will not enable us to observe what they are about. They will have a full half-hour of light before we shall be able to distinguish between the line of beach and the line of sea; far less to observe boats in motion. And let me tell you, that in calm weather, and with preparations well settled beforehand, a great deal may be done towards throwing troops ashore on an open beach in half an hour."

It was the duke's habit, when any matter took fast hold of his attention, to commit his thoughts to paper. He was ready, likewise, when consulted by others, to give his advice, or to record his judgment, in writing, at great length. Sometimes he

[1] MS. correspondence.

would even take the trouble, at the request of friends whom he was willing to oblige, to discuss in memoranda, subjects on which they desired to ascertain his opinions. It was in this spirit, and to gratify Colonel Gurwood, that he drew out his masterly criticism on M. Clausewitz's book; and an able parallel between his own character as a general and that of the Duke of Marlborough, written at the desire of the present Earl of Stanhope, is extant, and in Lord Stanhope's possession. Rarely, indeed, if ever, has a man, so much occupied as he, found time for half the amount of non-official authorship into which he entered. His ordinary chit-chat letters were alone sufficient to fill up the day of many, who would have resented the charge, had they been accused, of spending any portion of their lives in sheer idleness. Yet he had always leisure to join in the intercourse of society; and never failed to keep an engagement, be it ever so little to his taste, into which he had entered.

The duke's letters written about the period of the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment for the second time of a republic in France, show with what intense alarm he witnessed that movement. They show also that age had not obscured the acuteness of his perceptions. But the chief cause of anxiety was lest England or the continental powers should do anything to precipitate a war. There was nothing in the treaty of Vienna which, according to his view of the matter, pledged the allies to dictate to France under what form of government she should live. And if there had been, the acquiescence of Europe, in the substitution of an Orleanist for the old dynasty sufficed, in his opinion, to set it aside. Even the election of Louis Napoleon to the presidential chair, however much it may have surprised, awakened in him no disposition to counsel an appeal to arms. "We went to war with France," he used to say, "in 1793, not because she chose to set up republican institutions for herself, but because she seemed determined to impose them upon us, and upon all the world besides. And we continued the war till Buonaparte was put down, because with him upon the throne there was no security for the peace of Europe. But France shows no sign, as yet, of that restless propagandism which made her so troublesome and dangerous fifty years ago, and till she do so I am of opinion we are bound to apply to her case, as much as to the cases of other nations, the doctrine of non-intervention, on which we seem all to be agreed. Hence when invited by the French minister to dine with him at the embassy, on what is called Napoleon's fête-day, he not only

accepted the invitation, but after dinner proposed the health of Prince Louis Napoleon as President of the French Republic. I have reason to believe that nothing which occurred in England at that time gave greater satisfaction in Paris than this act of wise courtesy on the part of the duke. How far he would have approved of the re-establishment of the Empire, or of the means taken to bring it about, I cannot undertake to say; but it seems to me probable that other considerations would have yielded to that love of peace, which at every stage in his career was present with him, and which in the decline of life had become well-nigh a passion.

The last public service rendered to his country by the duke occurred in April, 1848, when London was threatened, or was supposed to be threatened, by a Chartist rebellion. That any real danger attended the entrance of Fergus O'Connor and his rabble into the city nobody now supposes, but the invasion of a rich and peaceful city, even by a rabble, is a matter not lightly to be regarded, and so the duke thought. He made, therefore, such arrangements of the military force at his disposal that after providing for the safety of the Bank, the Palace, and the public offices, enough was left to hold the bridges, and to keep the crowd pent helplessly up on Kennington Common, where from all quarters they had assembled. Never in the palmiest days of his youth had that great man, now seventy-nine years of age, been more self-possessed and energetic. The fire of other years seemed to have burst up again. The troops were all stationed where nobody saw them; the police alone, with thousands of special constables, appeared to keep the peace, and the air-bladder collapsed.

My tale of the life of this great and good man is drawing to a close. Besides suppressing the Chartist movement of 1848, he gave orders for that distribution of the military force in Ireland which effectually kept down the rebellious spirit of the people there; inflamed though it was by the speeches and writings of a knot of very clever but very wrong-headed journalists. His paper on that subject, which happily survives, exhibits the wonderful accuracy of his recollection, not in regard to the leading features of the country alone, but in reference to obscure streets and alleys in Dublin and other towns, which he could have had no opportunity of visiting for upwards of half a century. In 1849 he supported, with his usual heartiness and good feeling, the vote of thanks which was passed in the House of Lords to Lord Gough, and the officers and men who had

brought to a glorious termination the war in the Punjaub. In 1850 he referred forcibly, but in the best taste, to the loss which the country had just sustained by the death of Sir Robert Peel. In 1851 he was chiefly engaged in defending the privileges of the University of Oxford, and in achieving that modification in the constitution of the royal commission, which rendered it, as we have seen, so effective for good. But years in their progress were beginning to tell even upon him. His frame, once erect and athletic, had become shrunken; his hair grew thin and white, contrasting strongly with the eyebrows, which retained much of their original dark tinge to the last. And though the eye itself, when lighted up, was still clear and piercing, the lines of old age were strongly marked on every other feature of his face. Fits of somnolency used to come over him also, and he was no longer the indefatigable man of business that he used to be. For some time back he had stooped a good deal; he now began to totter in his walk. His seat on horseback, never at any time a firm one, grew loose, and he reached and descended from the saddle with difficulty. Deafness likewise increased upon him to a painful degree, so much so, indeed, as to render society positively irksome; and his mind, though vigorous when any important or interesting subject was presented to it, began visibly to stiffen. Still, with the iron will which never deserted him, he struggled against the infirmities of the flesh, and kept them at bay. When the Great Exhibition took place in 1851, he played his part well in the pageant of its opening. Nor were many public men more diligent than he in their after-visits to the Crystal Palace. In the evening of the opening day he dined with Miss Burdett Coutts, for whom he entertained a sincere regard, and who was among the warmest of his admirers; and as it happened to be his birthday, the Duke of Brabant, who was present, proposed that the company should drink his health. This was done some little time after the ladies had withdrawn, and the compliment was acknowledged very characteristically: "Gentleman, I am much obliged to you, and now let us go to the ladies."

In 1852 the administration was again changed. Lord John Russell, being defeated on a question of the militia force of the country, resigned, and the Conservatives came into power. The parliament was in consequence dissolved; but in spite of his acknowledged preference for the policy of which Lord Derby was the exponent, the duke took no part whatever in the elections which followed. He adhered to his old principle, that

they who endeavour by extraordinary means to bias the minds of the constituency at such seasons, are guilty of a wrong both to individual voters and to the public; and though urged to exert his influence, both at Dover and Sandwich, in favour of the government candidates, he refused. The government party, as was natural, complained that such refusal was unfair towards them. But he acted on this as upon all occasions, from a strong sense of duty, and took the reproaches which were heaped upon him patiently. These, with many other topics of passing interest, are freely discussed in his private correspondence, which, so far from diminishing, appears to have grown more voluminous as years increased upon him. It may not be uninteresting if I subjoin one or two specimens of the tone which pervaded this correspondence.

A letter full of feeling, written on his birthday, opens thus:—

"London, 1*st May*, 1852.

"I have been all this morning receiving visits, and have just now been down with Lady Douro as far as her house. I was followed and saluted as I went through in the streets. Cromwell's reflection occurred to me: They would readily follow and pull me to pieces, if convicted of exerting undue influence," etc.

Another of later date is curious, as giving his own version of the attack made upon him by the mob in 1832. After noticing an application from Dr. Maltby, Bishop of Durham, in favour of some man who desired an appointment under the corporation of the Trinity House, on the plea of services rendered, or assumed to have been rendered, to himself personally on that day, the duke proceeds:—

"The whole story is false. I picked up two soldiers, who recognised me, and I placed one on each side of me, to guard my legs and heels; and I desired, if I halted, that they should each of them face outwards, and prevent anybody from approaching my heels. The soldiers were followed by women, children, and men, waving their handkerchiefs. Many men came out and offered me an asylum in their houses. But I declined, saying, if I were to get in, in what manner am I to get out again and go home? All I cared about was the loss of my way. If I had taken a wrong turn, and had been obliged to return in the face of the mob, I should have been destroyed.

There was fortunately no mud in the streets, and nothing could be thrown. I passed some carts loaded with coals, with which I expected to be pelted, but the head of the mob could not stop to get the coals; and those which followed, if they got any, could not make their way to the head, in order to pelt me. One gentleman followed me in a tilbury, and the groom now in my service. I never discovered who that gentleman was. I thought that he was of service to me, and that he intended it. Certainly while he followed me, the mob could not run in upon me."

It would be unjust to the duke's memory, having thus referred to his letter to the Bishop of Durham, were I to withhold the letter itself. It was written on the 7th of September, that just quoted on the 8th, and both bear date Walmer Castle.

"My Lord Bishop,—I have had the honour of receiving your lordishp's letter of the 6th instant. I perfectly recollect having been followed by a mob from the Mint to Lincoln's Inn on the 18th of June, 1832. I have heard of individual acts of many persons for my relief, but I am under the necessity of confessing that I have no recollection of such acts during the progress of the riot and pursuit. If I could recollect such acts, I should personally feel very grateful. But, my lord, I have been unanimously elected a Master of the Corporation of the Trinity House. I believe many have as good a right to it as I. I consider myself bound to perform the duties in a view solely to the interests of the public and the credit of the corporation, and I cannot use its patronage to reward services rendered to myself personally—particularly if I were in personal danger. But, moreover, I never have decided upon any question of patronage at the Trinity House, excepting when seated in my place at the board, and I must decline," etc.

The duke gave his usual Waterloo dinner this year on the 18th of June, and it was remarked by all his guests, of whom the late Prince Consort was the only one who had not shared with him the dangers and glories of the day, that he had never on any previous occasion appeared more cheerful, or more completely master of himself. He spoke, likewise, in the House of Lords with great animation in support of the Militia Bill, introduced into parliament by Mr. Walpole. Yet the hand of death was already stretched out towards him. His

constitution, naturally robust, had sustained a severe shock from repeated fits of catalepsy, the first of which seized him in 1837, when riding on horseback in Hyde Park. It was not so severe as to deprive him of all command over himself, for he kept his seat and reached home. But the groom observed, when he dismounted, that he staggered, and he was supported to his own apartment, where he lay down. Dr. Hume was sent for, but before he arrived the fit had passed away, and the duke, treating the matter very lightly, refused to take any medicine, and went about his business as usual. From that time up to 1841 the fits frequently returned, and, on one or two occasions, with such severity as to cause great alarm to his family and friends. An opinion generally prevailed that the duke consented to have a seton introduced into his neck. This was not the case; but by a rigid attention to diet, and submission to such treatment as his medical attendants prescribed, he managed to keep the disorder at bay, and the fits occurred more rarely and with less violence. Still the disease was there, and both mind and body, more or less, suffered from it. The irritability of his temper grew painfully upon him, and even his generosity degenerated, on more than one occasion, into weakness. I have elsewhere referred to this subject, extracting, at the same time, a letter, which showed that when deceived, he was deceived with his eyes open, for he certainly did not believe half the stories of distress that were conveyed to him. The letter in question was written at Walmer Castle, to which place the duke had repaired on the 25th of August, apparently in his usual health. He had previously gone down on the 7th, attended only by his valet, in order to receive the queen, should her Majesty be disposed to land, on her progress from Osborne to Ostend. But the weather proved boisterous, and her Majesty preferred staying on board the yacht, the Prince Consort only coming on shore, and spending an hour with the duke in the castle grounds. This was on the 10th of August, and on the 11th, the royal squadron pursued its course, while the duke drove across to Dover, and there took the rail for London. On the 25th, however, as has just been stated, he returned, bringing with him his whole establishment of servants, horses, and carriages,—a sufficient indication that his autumnal sojourn was begun; and preparations were immediately made to welcome and entertain guests, to whom he appeared desirous of doing honour.

The guests in question were, the Grand Duke and Duchess of

Mecklenburg-Strelitz,—the latter a Russian princess, and daughter of the late Grand Duke Michael. They reached the castle on the 26th, and were met at dinner by Baron Brunnow, the Russian minister at the court of St. James's, and his private secretary; by the Earl of Clanwilliam, captain of Deal Castle, with the countess, and their daughter, Lady Selina Meade; by Admiral Sir John Hill, captain of Sandown Castle; Captain Vincent, R.N., captain of Sandgate Castle; and Captain Watts, captain of Walmer Castle. "I never," says Captain Watts, "saw the duke in better health or spirits. In the evening, soon after we left the dining-room, the grand duke asked me whether there was not a particularly good picture of the duke in Walmer Castle? I replied that there was no picture, but a very good engraving,—that it hung in the dining-room, and that I had often heard the duke say, that he considered it the best likeness of himself that had ever been taken. The grand duke requested me to return with him to the dining-room, that he might examine the engraving; and after he had gazed at it for some time, remarked that the duchess ought likewise to see it. He went immediately into the drawing-room to fetch her; whereupon the duke himself came back with them, and observing what the purpose was which brought them into the dining-room, he said to the duchess in French, 'That is the very best likeness that was ever taken of me.' He added after a short pause, 'Perhaps you would like to possess it.' The offer was at once and gladly accepted; upon which he rang the bell, and desired the butler to take the engraving out of the frame, and to bring it to him next morning, that he might inscribe his name at the bottom. Everything was done as the duke directed. The engraving was taken from the frame; the duke subscribed it with his name; it was then carefully packed, and probably hangs at this hour in one of the apartments of the palace at Mecklenburg."

Two incidents marked the progress of this little affair, of sufficient importance, as it seems to me, to justify the minuteness with which I have detailed it. The first is, that when the engraving was brought to the duke in the morning, in order that he might subscribe it, he did what he was never known on any previous occasion to have done; he tried the pen which was put into his hand before making use of it. The next, that though he wrote by that night's post to his publisher in London for a fac-simile of the engraving, wherewith to fill the vacant frame, his order was not executed. The fact is, that the

engraving which he had given away was what is called a proof engraving, of which no stock remained on hand. Great pains were taken to seek for a copy in various directions, but without success; and now among the effigies of other lords warden that of the duke hangs in the dining-room at Walmer Castle, not a proof, but a common engraving, which did not reach its place till the day after the great original had ceased to take interest in sublunary affairs.

On the 28th, a little before noon, the grand duke and duchess took their departure, the duke driving the latter to Dover in a pony carriage. He returned after seeing them on board the packet, and spent the evening alone. He never from that day received any more guests at his table; indeed, up to the 8th of September, he remained, with his domestics, the sole occupant of the castle. Daily, however, he might be seen riding or walking about, and once he went as far as Folkestone. It was to visit Mr. Croker, who had removed thither in search of that health which was never to be restored to him again; and the duke's movements being dependent on the return of the train to Dover, they spent some hours together. Mr. Croker, ill as he was, made a note of the conversation which passed between them, and sent copies of it to several of the duke's friends. It related almost entirely to times gone by, and to persons long removed from the scene of life. It was full of interest, of course, to the pair who joined in it; and as evincing the clearness of the duke's mind when turned to such subjects, the members of his own family, and the few individuals without that circle, to whom names and dates of more than sixty years' standing are familiar, cannot fail to value such a record. But the general reader would scarcely care to have it brought before him, and if it were so brought would probably not understand it.

On the 8th of September, the duke's solitude was broken in upon by the arrival of his second son, Lord Charles Wellesley, accompanied by Lady Charles and their children. This was a great delight to the duke; for, independently of his attachment to the parents, he was exceedingly fond of his grandchildren, and often made them his companions in the strolls which he took through the grounds, or to and fro along the terrace-walk, which runs between the castle and the sea. In other respects, he pursued his usual course, devoting a portion of each morning to his private correspondence, while the evenings were spent chiefly in reading. One out of the many letters written by him at this time, contains a sentence which is at least

remarkable; and which, if the mind of the reader be prone to superstition, may even appear to have been ominous. On the 12th of September he wrote thus:—"I had a letter this morning from a madman, who announces that he is a messenger from the Lord, and will deliver his message to me to-morrow morning: we shall see." Who the writer was has never been ascertained, but the message from the Lord was already on its way.

The duke took more than his usual amount of exercise on the 13th, and ate a good dinner with much relish. Wine he had long given up, but he drank his iced water, as his custom was, and retired to bed, apparently in excellent health, about half-past eleven o'clock. He was always an early riser, and his valet went at six in the morning of the 14th to call him. He appeared, however, to be sleeping heavily; and the servant, finding that he did not awake, though the fire was stirred, and the fire-irons clashed together, thought that it would be a pity to disturb his master, and withdrew again. Soon afterwards one of the maids met him, and said she was afraid that the duke was ill, for she thought that she had heard him groan. The valet repaired at once to his master's chamber, and opening the shutters, said, "It is getting quite late, your grace; it is past seven o'clock." "Is it?" replied the duke in his usual tone of voice. "Do you know where the apothecary lives?" "Yes, your grace." "Then send and let him know that I should like to see him. I don't feel quite well, and I will lie still till he comes."

This was such an admission as the duke had never been known under similar circumstances to make, and it created proportionable alarm. A messenger was accordingly despatched on horseback for Mr. Hulke, of Deal, who soon arrived, and was introduced into the duke's apartment. Mr. Hulke examined his patient, looking at the tongue and feeling the pulse; and having pronounced that there was no ground for apprehension, advised that he should take a cup of tea, and remain quiet. He prescribed no medicine, because he considered that none was required; for the duke's stomach seemed to have relieved itself during the night, and rest was all that appeared necessary to restore him. Mr. Hulke, therefore, took his leave, and a cup of tea was given to the duke as soon as it could be got ready. It operated upon him, after a brief interval, like an emetic, and he became very restless and uneasy. By this time the whole household was disturbed, and

Lord and Lady Charles came into the bedroom, whither also Captain Watts soon followed. They all saw that this was no passing fit of indisposition, and at once sent off fresh messengers in search both of Mr. Hulke and of Dr. M'Arthur. The former after a brief interval arrived; the latter, who happened to be from home, did not come till later. An emetic was given, which, however, produced no amelioration of the symptoms, but the reverse; and then calomel, which it appeared had never failed before in relieving such attacks, was administered. Probably neither calomel nor any other remedy, no matter when applied, would have been of the smallest avail. The duke's hour was come; and though, with the determination of purpose which belonged to his nature, he seemed to put it from him, the summons had gone forth which admits of no baffling. His anxious attendants perceiving that he breathed with increased difficulty, and appeared otherwise to suffer, lifted him out of bed, and placed him in an easy-chair. Nothing was gained by that change of position; he never rallied. The strong will kept death at bay till towards seven o'clock in the evening; but physical power was wanting to repel him altogether. A fit came on, similar in every respect to the worst of those to which he had formerly been subject, and after a few convulsive struggles he ceased to breathe. Yet so calm and tranquil was his departure; so little was he changed, even in appearance, that not till a mirror had been held up before his face, could those by whom he was surrounded tell that life was extinct.

The alarming nature of the attack under which the duke was suffering no sooner became apparent, than telegraphic despatches were sent off to London for Dr. Ferguson and Dr. Hume. Both, unfortunately, happened to be in Scotland; and, after considerable delay, Dr. Williams was requested to go down to Walmer. He took the first train which started, but could not reach the castle till all was over. He found but the mortal remains of his illustrious patient laid out upon the little camp bed, in which while living he usually slept; and a household plunged in the very depths of sorrow and consternation.

The Marquis of Douro, the duke's eldest son, chanced to be abroad at the time of his father's death. He was immediately informed by telegraph of the calamity which had befallen, and travelling post, he arrived at the castle on the 17th. We draw a veil over all that followed. He, himself, had often been heard

to say, "Where the tree falls, there let it lie," and had his words been fulfilled, he would have rested now in a humble grave in the churchyard of Walmer. But public feeling would not have it so. The great duke had been the property of the nation while he lived, and the nation claimed the right of disposing of his remains now that he was dead. It was determined that a public funeral should mark the sense of the people's reverence for his memory and of their grief for his loss. But time was needed to mature and complete the necessary preparations, and the body, being enclosed in a shell, was therefore left for a while under proper care in the castle. A guard of honour, composed of a portion of his own rifle regiment, did duty over it. The castle flag was hoisted daily half-mast high, and on the 9th and 10th of November the inhabitants of Deal and Walmer and its vicinity were admitted to take their last look at his remains, as they lay there in state. Upwards of 9000 persons availed themselves of this privilege, and all, without exception, evinced unmistakable proofs of reverence, many of deep emotion.

At six in the evening of the 10th, Lord Douro, the present duke, arrived, accompanied by Lord Arthur Hay, and by a gentleman from the Lord Chamberlain's office, who had been directed to superintend the removal of the body from Walmer to London. It was placed upon a hearse, and conveyed by torchlight to the railway station, a guard of the Rifle Brigade attending it, and the batteries at Walmer and Deal Castle firing minute guns. Sandown Castle took up the melancholy salute as the train, with its sacred burden, swept by; and, about half-past twelve, the hearse, with its attendants, reached the Bricklayers' Arms. Here a squadron of the 2nd Life Guards was in waiting to receive them, and once more, by the dim light of torches, the melancholy *cortège* passed on. Many a window was thrown up, that men might gaze on the cavalcade as it moved through the streets; and few, whom the unaccustomed tramp of horses had roused from their slumbers, slept again that night, except with spirits saddened and subdued.

The procession reached Chelsea about three in the morning, when the coffin containing the body was carried into the hall of the Royal Military Hospital. That noble apartment, as well as the chapel, had been previously hung with black, and was now lighted only by waxen tapers, placed here and there in silver sconces. The coffin rested upon an elevated platform at the end of the hall, over which was suspended a cloud-like

canopy or veil. Life Guardsmen with arms reversed lined the apartment like statues, while beside the body sat six chief mourners. The coffin itself was covered with red velvet, and at the foot stood a table, on which all the decorations of the deceased were laid out. Thither, day by day, in a constant stream, crowds of men, women, and children repaired, all dressed in deep mourning, that they might pay their last tribute of respect to him who could no longer acknowledge it. The first of these visitors was her Majesty the queen, accompanied by the youthful branches of her family. But so deeply was she affected that she never got beyond the centre of the hall, where her feelings quite overcame her, and whence she was led, weeping bitterly, to her carriage.

The public funeral took place on the 18th of November, and was attended by the Prince Consort, and all the chief officers of state. The military arrangements necessary for it had previously been completed; and with a view, it is presumed, to give consistency to the whole affair, the body was removed by torchlight a little before midnight on the 17th, under an escort of cavalry, to the Horse Guards. There, in the room which had often witnessed his attention to the affairs of that army which was now to furnish his chief mourners, all that remained of the duke rested till dawn. And then the solemn ceremony began. From St. Paul's Cathedral, down Fleet Street, along the Strand, by Charing Cross and Pall Mall, to St. James's Park, troops lined both sides of the streets; while in the Park itself columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery were formed, ready to fall into their proper places after the march began. How it was conducted, with what respectful interest watched by high and low, how solemn the notes of the bands, as one after another they took up and poured out the "Dead March in Saul," how grand, yet how touching the scene in the interior of St. Paul's, within which were gathered almost all that survived of his companions in arms, it is not necessary for one to describe. The representatives of all the great powers of Europe, Austria alone excepted,[1] were there to do him honour. The rank, talent, station, and beauty of Great Britain joined in the solemn requiem wherewith the funeral service closed. And as if it had been decreed that to the very last everything connected with

[1] Austria was at this time offended by the treatment given to one of her generals by a mob of draymen. She could not be made to understand that every respectable person in the kingdom lamented the outrage, but that there was no remedy for it except by due course of law.

him should have a character of its own, the elements themselves combined as it were to do him honour. The weather had been boisterous for some days previously, and the early morning of the 18th itself set in with wind and rain. But scarcely was the funeral procession arranged ere the clouds broke, and the sky shone out blue and clear upon the car and its attendants. It was but a respite, so to speak, in the war of nature; for the doors of St. Paul's had not long been shut ere the storm burst forth again, and in rain and wind the day closed which witnessed the funeral of the great duke. Again, the mind which is prone to superstition will find food on which to ruminate. He who had conquered, and, for well-nigh forty years, preserved the peace of Europe, was gone; and there followed his removal from among us the war in the Crimea, with all the unsatisfactory results to which it has led.

CHAPTER XLII

THE DUKE AS A MAN, A SOLDIER, A STATESMAN—HIS PLAYFULNESS—HIS KINDLINESS—HIS SELF-POSSESSION—HIS WISDOM

If there be any English reader who, after a perusal of this narrative, finds it difficult to arrive at a just appreciation of the great man whose career has been therein set down, the circumstance must be attributed to one of two causes. Either he has little accustomed himself to draw inferences from events as they pass before him, or I have very imperfectly accomplished the task which I ventured to set to myself. For the character of the Duke of Wellington was, perhaps, more completely free from disguise than that of any other man, whether of ancient or modern times, who has filled so large a space in the world's history. The great leading principle of his moral being was—duty. In private life he was truth itself. As a public man, he had but one object in view, viz., to benefit, to the utmost of his ability and skill, the state, whose servant he was. Of personal ambition, in the vulgar acceptation of that term, the duke knew nothing. The desire of winning applause, or of advancing himself to places of honour and power, seems never, from first to last, to have moved him. There are no stories extant of a boyish ambition in him to become the leader of his companions in their sports and pastimes. He never taught them how to construct castles of snow, nor led them to the attack or defence of such castles when constructed. His career at school is so completely without note, that had not Robert Smith recorded the circumstances of a bout at fisticuffs between the future deliverer of Europe and himself, the biographer of the Duke of Wellington would have been absolutely without a tale to tell of all that his hero may have said or done at Chelsea, at Eton, and at Angers. And so it is with his life as a subaltern, a captain, a major, and an aide-de-camp to the Lord-lieutenant of Ireland. It is a mere vacant space on the paper which is soon to be filled with the record of exploits such as struck the world with wonder; —a sure proof that the same simplicity of character which distinguished the man in after years belonged to him in youth;

and that content to do his duty, and to enjoy existence in his own peculiar way, he never made an effort to push himself out of his place, or to attract, in so doing, the gaze or admiration of the multitude.

The powers which all this while lay dormant came at once into play as soon as an adequate appeal was made to his sense of duty. He seems to have been almost the only officer of rank in the army of the Duke of York in Flanders who did not treat the requirements of the campaign as secondary to his own personal wants and humours. Whatever Colonel Wellesley was directed to do, he did energetically and punctually. Everybody else seemed to regard time as something not to be accounted of. The rearguard which covered the retreat beyond the Wahl was always where it ought to be to a moment. Other divisions rarely found their proper places, or found them too late. I have often heard him criticise that campaign, and always in the same terms. It was the best school to which an officer could be sent, who had sufficient discrimination to observe blunders and the effects of them, and wit enough to take warning from what he saw.

Colonel Wellesley obtained, as he deserved, great praise for his conduct in the Low Countries; yet so little was personal ambition or vanity stirred by it, that he made an effort, as we have seen, immediately on his return to England, to retire from the service. Happily for England, for Europe, and for himself, it proved unsuccessful; and India soon afterwards opened to him a field well suited both to his temperament and his genius. With what assiduity he applied himself there to questions, the solution of which might enable him to be of use to the government and to the people, but which had certainly no direct connection with his own success in his profession! With what untiring zeal he worked that others might benefit by his labours,—as in preparing for the Mysore campaign, and making all the arrangements necessary for the expedition to Egypt! And how ready he was, on every occasion, to do justice to merits far inferior to his own, while his own were systematically passed over! I do not mean to insinuate that all this failed, or could fail, to bear fruit in due season. Devotion to duty, if it be accompanied with talent, generally leads, even under our system, to advancement. But advancement, for the sake of the personal advantages which result from it, is not the end of a great man's ambition. In proportion as he achieves it, he becomes conscious of a wider sphere of usefulness, and is sensible

that his responsibility increases with the increase of his power. This was, to a remarkable extent, the effect of his early promotion upon General Wellesley. Each new step upwards on the ladder only placed him in a situation which, more than that from which he had ascended, supplied him with motives for fresh exertion; and that befell in his case, which befalls in the cases of all men similarly circumstanced. Wherever placed, he commanded the entire confidence, not only of the government which employed, but of the men and officers who served under him. There are now lying before me two letters, written in 1802, by a young officer in the Company's service to his relatives at home. They describe the movements of two corps, which at two separate times went out under Colonel Wellesley's orders, on special service from Seringapatam; and each contains this remarkable expression:—"Everything goes well, because Colonel Wellesley is in command. Whatever he undertakes he does admirably. Perhaps it was scarcely fair to employ him, rather than General ——; but we are all delighted to have him at our head; he makes us so confident and so comfortable."

The duke's Indian correspondence, now before the world, shows that in every situation he paid strict regard to the principle of duty, and to that alone. When collecting grain in the Deccan, he puts from him the opportunity of which others took advantage to enrich themselves. He gains so little by his command at Seringapatam, that the necessary hospitalities incident to it threaten him with ruin. His patronage is never exercised except for the advancement of the public good, and in reward of meritorious services performed by individuals. Colonel Close asks him to provide for the son of an old officer who was the friend of both. He acknowledges the claim so far as it is admissible, but explains that he, and such as he, are bound to look, not to the ties of personal regard, but to the higher requirements of the public service. An offer is made to him of separate command, which he could not accept without outraging the feelings and doing injustice to the merits of a senior officer. He points out where the injustice lies, and, professing himself ready to do whatever may be required, suggests that the wrong in question ought not to be committed. And this at a time when his pecuniary affairs are in such confusion that he is obliged to his brother for the means of purchasing his steps; and is glad on the receipt of prize-money, because it enables him to repay the debt.

On his return home from India, where he had led large armies

in the field, and administered the affairs of provinces equal in extent to many European kingdoms, he is appointed to the command of a brigade of infantry in Sussex. He goes through his routine duties zealously. Not a word of complaint or murmur escapes him; and when taunted, good-humouredly, with the change in his condition, he replies, "I have eaten the king's salt, and whatever he desires me to do that becomes my duty." His Irish administration has, indeed, been described by some writers as disfigured by the grossest jobbery. Is this fair? Is this candid? Certainly Sir Arthur Wellesley jobbed; but let us not forget that in those days government was avowedly carried on by influence; and that influence, especially in Ireland, meant pensions, places, and hard cash. It is evident, however, from his manner of dispensing these arguments, that Sir Arthur Wellesley put its right value on the morality of such as were convinced by them. He despised his instruments even when he made use of them. But he never imagined, placed as he was in a subordinate situation, that the duty of purifying the political atmosphere had devolved upon him. He was, perhaps, the most open, and therefore the most honest, trafficker in parliamentary support that ever bartered place or pension for votes. He never affected to believe in the principles of his correspondents. He knew them to be venal, and he bribed them because it was his duty to the government which he served so to do.

It is impossible to imagine an ordeal more trying than that to which the character of Arthur Duke of Wellington has been subjected. All his secrets are before the world. Colonel Gurwood's collection of Despatches, as they were called, gave us such an insight into the mind of the writer as had never before been obtained into the inner being of any public man. The supplementary volumes published by the present duke strip off the last rag of covering which clung to it. And the result is more and more to raise this extraordinary man in our estimation. The same spirit of integrity, the same devotion to duty, which were his pole-stars when rising into greatness, guided him to the end of his career. Whether he be in the field or in the senate, whether he strive to control the action of foreign governments or to guide the counsels of the legislature at home, he seeks the attainment of one object, and seeks it honestly. He will not arrive at an end justifiable in itself, by means which cannot be justified. He will never do evil that good may come. He rejects with indignation the use of the dagger when offered to rid him of Dhoondiah; and he will give

no countenance to Colonel D'Argenton's proposal to excite a mutiny in Soult's army. His great ground of quarrel with the Portuguese Regency is, that they are never true to their engagements; and that in their own persons they refuse to set the example of that obedience to law and right which they exact, or profess to exact, from the peasantry. He condemns the Spanish Juntas and the Cortes, even while he obeys them, because they are more intent on promoting the views of party than on directing the energies of the country against the common enemy. And so it is at home. Believing that the will of the nation can be constitutionally expressed only through the two Houses of Parliament, he will give no countenance to the formation of loyal societies out of doors, even at a time when, between political unions on one side and repeal associations on the other, the power both of the legislature and of the crown seems to him on the eve of dissolution. Nor was the case otherwise in matters of less prominent importance. He has trusts imposed upon him, and in no instance will he use them except for the public good. The freemen of Sandwich, Dover, and the other Cinque Ports, may vote as they please. He will neither give place to the supporters of his own policy, nor refuse it to such as oppose him, except upon the ground of personal fitness. He declines to put into the Trinity House an individual of whom he knows nothing, though the applicant employs a prelate to beg for him, and avers that he had been instrumental in saving the duke's life. He discountenances a proposal to damage or throw out a bill which is most distasteful to himself, because the means suggested appear to be dishonest. Whatever partook, or seemed to partake, of the crooked or disingenuous, was abhorrent to his nature; nor would any considerations of probable gain even to the country induce him to take part in it. Indeed, he goes further. More than one public man of acknowledged ability and weight in the House of which he was a member made proposals to the duke which, in his estimation, amounted to a breach of faith with their colleagues. He declined to receive such proposals, and preferred the imminent hazard of defeat to the prospect of success, by no means an obscure one, through the help of those whom "he could not trust."

Foreign writers are prone to compare the Duke of Wellington as a military commander with Napoleon, and to give, as is not perhaps unnatural in their case, the preference to the latter. I dissent from this judgment, as indeed I do from any endeavour

to draw a parallel between men who neither in their moral nor in their intellectual organisation had anything in common. Contrasted they may be—to compare them is impossible. Napoleon could not serve. He never undertook a trust in a subordinate situation which he did not divert to purposes of his own aggrandisement. He never, when advanced to the pinnacle of power, entered into an engagement which he was not prepared, when it suited his own interests, to violate. The duke was the most perfect servant of his king and country that the world ever saw. He flourished, no doubt, in a condition of society which presented insuperable obstacles to the accomplishment of ambitious projects, had he been unwise enough to entertain them. But there is proof in almost every line which he has written, in almost every word which he spoke, that, be the condition of society what it might, the one great object of his life would have been to secure the ascendency of law and order, and to preserve the throne and the constitution of the country unharmed. Nor can you place your finger upon a single engagement into which the duke ever entered, whether in private life as a member of society, or in public life as a general or a statesman, the terms of which were not rigidly fulfilled, however serious to himself the inconveniences might be.

But this is not all. An attempted parallel between two men whose lots were cast in moulds so essentially unlike fails at every turn. One, falling upon a season of anarchy and confusion, raised himself by the force of his own genius to supreme power; the other, born into a constitutional and well-regulated state, aimed only at serving his country, and served it faithfully. One, master of the greatest empire which the world has ever seen, wielded its enormous resources at pleasure; filled up his ranks by a process of unlimited conscription, and repaired the disaster of to-day by the victory of to-morrow. The other, acting under the control of a government parsimonious yet extravagant, feeble and vacillating, because dependent for its existence on the popular will, could not reckon from one day to another on being supported in any enterprise. To him victory itself was pregnant with danger; a single defeat would have been ruin; because battles, however they may terminate, cannot be fought without some loss; and the losses of an army which is recruited by voluntary enlistment are hard to supply. If, indeed, you seek to bring these two men into comparison, you must do so by considering what each did with the means at his disposal, till you arrive at an epoch when they are fairly

pitted against each other in the field, and one goes down. Even then, however, your comparison will be incomplete, and the inference drawn from it imperfect. Let them stand apart, therefore, each in his own niche within the temple of fame which they helped to rear one for the other, while you look back into history in search of leaders of armies with whom they may more appropriately and severally be brought into parallelism.

And here to the mind of the scholar will occur at once the names of two warriors, each a world's wonder in his day, whose position, whose genius, and, subject to obvious exceptions, the very detail of whose careers correspond with marvellous exactitude to those of Napoleon and our own Wellington.

Alexander the Macedonian was indeed born to a throne, and died a victor, lamenting that there were no more worlds to conquer. But Alexander's glory was achieved, and his victories won, in every instance, over armies far less perfectly organised than his own, and over generals immeasurably his inferiors. Alexander's tactics were bold, often rash, always aggressive, and his obstinacy was as strong as his arrogance was extravagant. The resources of each new state, as he overran it, were applied by him to purposes of further conquest, and if he escaped the destruction with which he seemed to be threatened in Bactria, it was because his troops refused to follow him further, and he was compelled, sorely against his will, to yield to their remonstrances.

Napoleon established his military reputation in contests with such leaders as Melas, Mack, and the Duke of Brunswick. He brought against armies drilled in the formal precision of Frederick's school new tactics, which had their rise rather in the necessities of the great French Revolution than in the genius of him who was its creature. His most memorable battles, likewise, were fought with numbers scarcely exceeding those with which Alexander forced the passage of the Granicus. It was only after he had annexed Holland, Belgium, and Italy, that he brought into the field such hosts as dictated peace to Austria in the palace of Schönbrunn, and perished through lack of forethought on the march from the Vistula to Moscow. Finally, he gave the law to continental Europe for ten years, because Europe was constrained to enslave itself, and he died at last defeated and in exile, only because self-worship had become the ruling passion of his nature. Might not Alexander have fallen as Napoleon fell had circumstances induced him to turn his arms against the Romans, or had there been in the far

East a people prepared to make the sacrifice which Russia made, when she committed her ancient capital to the flames, in order that the invaders might not find shelter within its walls?

Turn now to the careers of Hannibal and of Wellington, and observe in how many particulars these testify to the presence in each of the same temper, the same forethought, the same indomitable will, the same extraordinary genius for political not less than for military affairs, the same postponement of self and the claims of self to public duty. Both established their reputation as brilliant soldiers while serving against troops inferior to their own, and under the direction of kinsmen, not the least of whose merits it was that they knew how to make use of them. What Hannibal had been in Spain, when Asdrubal, his brother-in-law commanded there, Wellington became in India during the governor-generalship of his brother Lord Mornington. The former, though subordinate in rank, led the Carthaginians in the field as often as any enterprise requiring more than common skill and conduct was determined upon; and by his successes enabled Asdrubal to extend the limits of the Carthaginian empire to the Iberus. The latter, while yet a colonel, pacified Mysore, and defeated Dhoondiah; and being one of the youngest major-generals in the country, gained the battle of Assaye, and brought the great Mahratta confederation to the feet of the East India Company. It may be accounted an accident that, with so many centuries between, these two great men should have equally assumed, for the first time, the chief command of armies in the Spanish Peninsula; yet out of that circumstance, whether accidental or not, events arose which bring their characters more and more into parallelism. Hannibal and Wellington were both citizens of free states, of states governed by popular or aristocratic assemblies, in which party and its claims were at least as much attended to as the requirements of the public good. Both served powers which were rather naval than military, which were more ambitious of wealth, more covetous of influence, than bent upon the extension of their territorial limits. The highest ambition of Carthage was to become the first maritime nation of the Old World, and having accomplished that end, she made use of her navy to push her commerce everywhere. Powerful at sea, she was comparatively weak on shore, not through any lack of courage in her inhabitants, but because her military system was radically unsound, and she was too free and too wealthy

to endure a better. What followed? As soon as Hannibal found himself in independent command, he was glad to borrow from the Romans all that was best in their system, and to apply it, as far as circumstances would permit, to his own army; just as Wellington learned many useful lessons from the French, and would have learned more, but that the nature of the government under which he served prevented him.

Again, Carthage, with professions of peace continually upon her lips, was continually engaged in war, into which the cupidity of her merchants, rather than the ambition of her government, usually hurried her. And the mercantile element prevailing over the military in her councils, she starved, both in men and means, almost every foreign expedition which she sent out. So also it was, and, to a certain extent, continues to be, with England. Her fleets, manned by the press-gang, swept the ocean during the war of the French Revolution; her armies, raised by voluntary enlistment, were wasted upon enterprises as profitless as they were discursive.

When Hannibal broke with the Romans, by undertaking the siege of Saguntum, his force consisted of perhaps 80,000 men, of whom less than one half were drawn from Africa. The remainder consisted of Spaniards and, as we should now call them, Portuguese (Vaccæi, Olcades, Vettones, and others), whom he drilled in the Carthaginian tactics, and officered, in the higher ranks at least, with Carthaginian leaders. If inferior in some respects to the best of his Carthaginian legions, these became, under such management, excellent troops, and supplied the place of the reinforcements which his own government was either unable or unwilling to send him. If Wellington had not found in Portugal facilities for recruitment, he could have neither held his ground within the lines of Torres Vedras, nor made his famous march from the Tagus to the Ebro.

Again, the appliances which are indispensable towards carrying on war, such as money, stores, provisions, means of transport, Hannibal was obliged to create for himself. The supplies furnished to him from Africa, besides arriving in driblets, were always inadequate. Had not his administrative abilities been of the first order, he never could have begun his march towards Italy. Wellington's case, in its leading features, was very much the same. The most serious of the difficulties with which he had to contend, were occasioned by the negligence or short-sightedness of his own government. He might have starved, he certainly would have become immovable, but that he created

for himself a commissariat, a mint, a foreign trade in corn, magazines, and, above all, a system of transport which never failed him.

Even in their special excellences as commanders of troops, there is a striking similarity between the two men. Both were quick in establishing channels of intelligence, by means of which they became acquainted with all the enemy's movements. Both excelled in one of the most difficult operations of war, the passage of rivers. Wellington on the Douro and the Adour is but the counterpart of Hannibal on the Rhone and the Po; each crossed where the enemy least expected him, and by means which were as effective as they were hazardous. We may place them side by side also in the care which they took of their troops, and in their forethought which provided that the baggage necessary to this end should never be far in the rear. They equally saved their people from exposure to every uncalled-for hardship; they equally kept them, as far as possible, well clothed, well fed, and above all, well shod.

To the superficial observer, it may appear that, so far as dash and enterprise are concerned, Hannibal leaves Wellington far behind; and the fragmentary account which has reached us of the passage of the Alps, and of the brilliant campaigns which followed, may serve to give weight to this opinion. But two points deserve consideration here. First, Is that an enterprise worthy of a great general which separates him from his base of operations, leaving him no alternative between complete success and total destruction? and next, Did Hannibal, when he invaded Italy, commit this grievous error, exposing himself thereby to an amount of risk which there was nothing in the state of his own or the enemy's preparations to justify? The former of these questions will be answered in the negative, by all who understand what wise enterprise is. The second cannot receive a reply in the affirmative, except at the expense of Hannibal's military reputation, which no competent judge will venture to assail. The truth is, that Hannibal's inroad into Italy was quite as safe, or he believed it to be so, as Wellington's early attempts to penetrate from Portugal into Spain; first, when, side by side with Cuesta, he fought the battle of Talavera; and again, when after the battle of Salamanca, he made his entry into Madrid. He undertook both operations, trusting to the assurances of the Spaniards that they would supply the wants of his army, and operate, at least, a diversion in his favour. It was thus that Hannibal acted 2000 years

before Wellington was born. From the Ebro to the Alps he conquered, and took military possession; and he crossed the Alps themselves because he had reason to believe that the Gauls who dwelt beyond them would join him to a man. Neither were his communications with his immediate rear entirely broken, even after Hanno had been defeated; while the sea was always open to him, by means of which reinforcements and supplies could at any time reach him from Carthage. Hannibal and Wellington were equally deceived in their expectations. Both, after gaining great battles, were forced to withdraw: the one to defend Carthage, which he failed in doing; the other to save Portugal, and to gather strength for a third and more successful effort in Spain.

We might pursue this parallel further, by showing how closely these great men resembled each other in the moderation which they exhibited when carrying all before them, in their unfailing courage and determination, when to human appearance their cause was become desperate. Hannibal in Italy maintained among his troops the same strict discipline which Wellington maintained in the South of France; and both secured thereby the good-will of the people to whom they came as conquerors. The defeat of Asdrubal, terrible as it was, no more broke the courage of Hannibal than Wellington's resolution was shaken when tidings of the battle of Wagram reached him. Finally, both were the devoted servants of their country, and of its constitution, though both suffered from the inaptitude of the latter to a state of war. Marked differences the inquirer will doubtless find in the tempers of the men as well as in the careers of the generals. But these seem to be the results of the different circumstances under which they were placed. All that belonged, properly speaking, to themselves, their quickness to observe, their powers of calculation, their coolness, forethought, self-possession, justice, their fertility in resources, their exceeding strength of will, were essentially the same. Had Hannibal been thrown into Wellington's age and circumstances, he would have done, in all probability, much as Wellington did; had Wellington filled Hannibal's place in history, the name would have been changed, but the exploits of the Carthaginian commander would have come down to us very little varied from what we now find them.

In estimating the character of the Duke of Wellington as a soldier, it has not been unusual, both in England and elsewhere, to draw between him and John Duke of Marlborough a parallel

generally to the advantage of the latter. According to our view of the case, the materials for such a parallel are as scanty as the conclusion adverse to the Duke of Wellington is unjust. In this they doubtless resembled one another, that both understood how to handle troops; that both were careful of the health and general comforts of their men, and that both paid great attention to details. But so far they only fall into the groove along which great commanders have run since the world began; for no man can long command an army at all who is careless of the health and comforts of his men, and inattentive to matters of detail. When we look closer into the subject, however, it will be seen that there is not much similarity in the conditions under which Marlborough and Wellington respectively made war; and hence that the similitudes which are discoverable in the two careers affect particular operations rather than the genius of the men who directed them. The Duke of Marlborough, for example, assumed the command of an allied army in the Netherlands, after having studied his profession under Turenne and William III.; the latter an unsuccessful, but not therefore an incapable, officer. The Duke of Wellington's masters in the art of war were the Duke of York and Lord Harris, brave men both, but certainly not to be spoken of in the same breath with Turenne or William III. The Duke of Marlborough found himself at the head of Dutch, Austrian, and Sardinian troops,—all of them in as high a state of discipline as his own, and at least as well appointed. He had as his coadjutor Prince Eugene, a general scarcely inferior to himself in skill and capacity, and he carried on his operations against such officers as Tallard and Villars, the Duke of Burgundy, Villeroy, and Boufflers.

The Duke of Wellington was forced to construct for himself a Portuguese contingent, and having raised it to the highest state of perfection of which it seems to have been capable, used to say, that when led by British officers it was equal to the Sepoys. As to the Spanish armies, they were sometimes rather an encumbrance to him than the reverse; they could never, to the end of the war, be entirely depended upon. With respect, again, to his own lieutenants, the most that can be said is, that several among them possessed a fair share of ability; whereas his opponents were, Soult, Massena, Marmont, Victor, and finally Napoleon. Again, Marlborough, when supplies were wanting, made his requisitions upon states which, being under the management of regular governments, were always able,

and generally willing, to furnish whatever might be required. Wellington, on the other hand, was driven to create his own resources, and to provide his own means both of collecting and paying for them. Marlborough, supported by the queen, and backed by the undivided influence of the Revolution Government, had at his command the whole military resources of Great Britain. There were then no colonies in all parts of the world to protect; no India to guard, no Mediterranean fortresses to garrison. Wellington found it necessary to sustain the courage of a feeble cabinet, which, in the face of popular clamour and a strong parliamentary opposition, was afraid to put forth the strength of the empire, even though in withholding it they exposed both their general and his army to destruction. No doubt the field deputies were a source of great annoyance to Marlborough, from which, however, he succeeded at last in delivering himself; but the Portuguese Regency, and the Juntas and Cortes of Spain, hung like a mill-stone round the neck of Wellington, from the opening to the close of the struggle. I might go further, and refer to the tone which pervades the correspondence of these two men, the one always keeping in view self-aggrandisement, and the interests of party, the other taking no serious thought of anything except the public service, and the best means of promoting it. But this is not necessary; Marlborough and Wellington were both great men,—great in politics, perhaps greater in war; but except that neither of them ever sustained a defeat, there is little which, to him who examines their respective courses with attention, will serve to place them in any degree of parallelism one towards the other.

And this naturally leads to a consideration of the calls which were made upon them for the management, not of combined armies alone, but of courts and cabinets, of which the views were often as narrow as they were discordant. The task imposed upon Marlborough in this respect was heavy enough. He had to excite the states-general, always indolent and greedy, to self-denial and activity, while he kept up the sinking courage of the emperor, and restrained the impetuosity of the House of Savoy. He succeeded, as he invariably did, in diplomacy, by dint of great penetration into the characters of others, by winning manners, and the hearty support of Godolphin and the Duchess Sarah at home. But success enabled him only to lay upon others a responsibility which he could not himself undertake. He never found it necessary, first to create the resources

of the states with which he was in communication, and then to wield them. How it fared with Wellington in these respects in India, in the Spanish Peninsula, and in France, I need not here stop to point out.

The place to be allotted to the Duke of Wellington as a leading statesman under a constitutional government will be determined, as a matter of course, according to the opinions entertained by those who sit in judgment upon him, on certain great constitutional questions. That he was a royalist in every sense of the term, all who came in contact with him understood. The government of the empire was for him the king's government; the peace of the realm was the king's peace; the army, the navy, the magistracy, the parliament itself were the king's. The throne was the fountain, not of honour only, but of all the rights and privileges which the people enjoyed. Yet the throne, as he regarded it, was as much hemmed in by law, and even by custom, as the humblest of the lieges. And so it came to pass that, royalist as he was, no man stood up more stoutly for the people and their rights than the Duke of Wellington. Like the best of the cavaliers in the time of the first Charles, it was for the crown, as the greatest institution in the country, that he was prepared to risk everything. Hence, if the king's ministers proposed measures which he believed to be mischievous or unsafe, he opposed them. Hence, too, if the sovereign expressed wishes, a compliance with which would tend in his opinion to bring the crown into disrepute, he resisted such wishes. Had his advice been taken, the country might have escaped much, if not all, the scandal of Queen Caroline's trial. He overruled George IV. in other caprices, equally with that calculated to add to his unpopularity. While prepared at all hazards to deliver William IV. out of his difficulties, he did not hesitate to point out to his Majesty where he had gone wrong. And even towards Queen Victoria, for whom he would have cheerfully laid down his life, he took on one memorable occasion an attitude somewhat savouring of harshness. He joined the opposition to the grant proposed by Lord Melbourne for Prince Albert on his marriage, and cut it down from £50,000 to £30,000 a year. However unpalatable at the moment this act might be, neither the sovereign nor the people could mistake his motive, and both the sovereign and the people gave him in return increased esteem and reverence.

For many years after he became a minister, the duke's place in the cabinet was a subordinate one. His own tenure of office

as head of an administration was brief. Yet he contrived in that interval to pass a measure from grappling with which all previous governments had shrunk. His Catholic Relief Bill would have been more satisfactory had he been able to carry it in its original form. But with all the imperfections which others ingrafted upon it, who will speak of it as a blunder? That the Tories of 1829 blundered in breaking off from his guidance, there are probably few survivors of that gallant but headstrong band who will now deny. But surely the blame of subsequent misfortunes, if misfortunes we are to consider them, rests, not with him who got rid of an insuperable obstacle to all government, but with his angry followers, who, to gratify a spirit of revenge, placed him in a minority in the House of Commons, and insured the accession of the Whigs to office.

The duke's policy and system of management on the two great questions of parliamentary reform and free-trade in corn, are, and will remain to the end of time, fair subjects of discussion. That he exaggerated the amount of danger to be apprehended from both measures, may be true. Experience, as far as it has yet instructed us, seems to indicate as much; but believing, as he did, that Lord Grey's bill, if passed into law, would sap the foundations of the monarchy, and that the means adopted by the minister to pass it into law were even more pregnant with danger than the bill itself, we cannot, understanding his nature, and taking proper measure of his principles, blame him for having resisted it at every stage. Of his subsequent conduct when in opposition, and his perfect disinterestedness after the Conservatives returned to power, there cannot be two opinions. And if he seemed to desert his party when Sir Robert Peel gave up the corn laws, let it not be forgotten that he went with Sir Robert for the party's sake. It was in the hope of keeping power in the hands of Conservative statesmen that he sacrificed the most fondly cherished of all his political opinions.

All this, however, only brings us back to the point from which we started in 1826. Was it possible for a man, already so great as the Duke of Wellington, to descend into the arena of party politics, without subtracting from his greatness. Add to it he could not, and therefore be the results of the experiment what they may, both to the country and to himself, this at least is certain, that in making it he yielded to no suggestion of merely selfish ambition.

Of the duke as an orator enough has already been said to

convey a tolerably accurate impression to the mind of a careful reader. He had been many years a regular attendant in the House of Lords, before he ever thought of addressing it, except when some appeal was made directly to himself, and then he spoke briefly. He became all at once its leader, not in council only and by the force of his strong understanding, but in debate. His speeches, like his letters, are plain, straightforward, and to the purpose. His arguments were from time to time well sustained, and even ingenious; as in his censure of Earl Grey for dissolving parliament in 1831, and in the view which he took of the effect of the laws against Roman Catholics upon the constitution properly so called. His articulation, never very clear, became in latter years difficult, and sometimes painful. He would make long pauses when speaking, repeat himself, and occasionally employ terms which amounted to exaggeration. But in every instance what he said had in it a large measure of good sense, and was invariably listened to, both in the House of Lords and elsewhere, with respect.

The attention which the duke commanded for himself, he never failed to give to others. There he sat, with his hat drawn over his brows, and his hand up to his ear, listening to one noble lord after another, as if each had an argument to advance which might possibly change his own views of the point under discussion. And when otherwise unable to catch the substance of what was said, he would move as close to the speaker as the customs of the House allowed, and stand till the speech came to a close.

Of the duke's personal peculiarities, both physical and mental, enough, it may be thought, has been said elsewhere, yet my portrait would scarcely be complete were I to omit all notice of them in this place. Nature had endowed him with a robust frame and an iron constitution. In height he measured about five feet nine inches—I speak, of course, of what he was in the vigour of his days, for latterly old age had shrunk and bowed his frame, and given him the habit of stooping. His shoulders were broad, his chest well developed, his arms long, and his hands and feet in excellent proportion. His eyes were of a dark violet blue, or grey, and his sight was so penetrating, that even to the last he could distinguish objects at an immense distance. The general expression of his countenance when silent or preoccupied, was grave; but his smile had a charm about it which, when once seen, could never be forgotten. A forehead not very high, but broad and square, eyebrows straight

and prominent, a long face, a Roman nose, a broad under-jaw, with a chin strongly marked, gave him a striking resemblance to more than one of the heroes of antiquity, especially to Julius Cæsar. His hair, which was originally a clear brown, had become white as silver before he died, but to the last there was no baldness, even at the temples. If you met him in a crowd or upon the street, and were entirely ignorant that he was a great man, you would be impelled by some secret impulse to fix your eye upon him, and to turn round and look after him when he had passed. I saw him for the first time as he crossed the line of march during a military operation in Spain. Only three mounted officers attended him, and he was simply dressed in a grey frock, a cocked hat covered with oil-skin, and grey trousers; but instinctively he was recognised as the commander of the forces, and the impression then made upon the mind of a boy, never in after life passed away.

The military costume of the duke on active service was singularly plain, though becoming, and very peculiar. On state occasions he wore the full dress of his rank, with all his orders and decorations; but in the field his garb was either a blue or a grey frock—blue when fighting was not expected; grey, if a battle were in preparation or in progress. Over this, that he might be more easily recognised from afar, he often threw a short white cloak, which is still in existence, and may be seen in a glass case at Apsley House. His cocked hat was very low, rising but little above the crown of the head, and he rarely surmounted it with a plume. The boots known as "Wellingtons" were of his own invention, and outside the trousers he used often to wear mud-guards of strong leather, which overlapped and were fastened with straps and buckles. His sword was a light steel-mounted sabre, which he suspended from his waist by a black belt. He never wore a sash except *en grande tenue*.

His morning dress, as a civilian, was scrupulously neat and clean, but varied very little, and that only with the change of seasons. In summer he might be recognised, on foot or on horseback, by his low-crowned narrow-brimmed hat, his white cravat fastened with a silver buckle behind; his blue frock, white waistcoat, and white trousers. In winter there were the same hat, neckcloth, and frock, with a waistcoat blue, sometimes red, and blue trousers. He never wore a great-coat, but in severe weather threw a short cloak or cape over his shoulders, made of blue cloth, with a white lining. His evening attire,

except when he was in mourning, consisted of a blue coat with metal buttons, a white cravat and waistcoat, black breeches, and silk stockings, or tight black pantaloons. On these occasions he wore the order of the Garter under the left knee, with the Golden Fleece suspended round his neck, the blue or other ribbon, and a star. When at Walmer, he often dressed for dinner in the uniform of the Cinque Ports, viz., a blue coat with scarlet collar and cuffs, and blue trousers with a red stripe down the outer seam.

Though a bold rider and a fearless driver, it cannot be said that the duke was either skilful in equitation or an expert whip. His seat when mounted was loose, and latterly not very graceful. He spared no expense in furnishing his stables, but somehow or another his horses were rarely without a fault. The truth, I believe, was, that besides being but an indifferent judge of the animal at the outset, he became so much attached to it when he had ridden it for a while, that he continued to use it after any other man would have exchanged it for another. Of the sort of carriage in which he used to be conveyed to and from the Horse Guards, I have already spoken. In the country, before he ceased to be his own charioteer, he was in the habit of driving sometimes a curricle, sometimes, when his house was full of guests, a sort of *char-à-banc*. Being deaf in the left ear, he sat always on the left side of the box, and his driving was like that of Jehu the son of Nimshi, furious. It happened that on one occasion I, being in another carriage behind him, endeavoured to follow close through the narrow uneven lanes which connect Barfriston with Walmer. It was a vain effort; he was soon out of sight. Arriving by and by at the castle gate, I was met by Lord Clanwilliam, who had been the duke's companion in the curricle. "The duke gets along," was the remark, "he soon left me behind." "There is no doubt of that," was the answer; "I thought more than once that he would have left me behind too."

The duke's manner of life was plain, regular, and methodical. He mixed, indeed, freely in the society of London during the season, for everybody desired to have him, and he went everywhere—not in search of personal gratification to himself, but because he knew that others would be gratified by his presence. Indeed he felt, and to his more intimate friends often complained, of the burden which society was to him, though in this, as in graver matters, his own ease was invariably postponed to what he held to be a duty. Elsewhere than in London, his

habits were simple, I had almost said severe. The rooms most plainly furnished in Strathfieldsaye and Walmer Castle were those which he personally occupied. He slept at Strathfieldsaye upon a sofa, at Walmer upon a small iron bedstead, which might have served him, and was commonly, though erroneously, supposed to have done so, throughout his wars in the Peninsula. Both couches were without posts or curtains, or hangings of any kind; and the bedding consisted of a hair mattress, a blanket, and an eider-down quilt. At Walmer, his bedroom served him as a private sitting-room also. It was situated within one of the bastions of the castle, and, besides his couch, contained a few chairs, two tables, and a bookcase so placed that he could take down a volume from it at pleasure while in bed, and a chest of drawers. The Bible, the Prayer-book, a copy of Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Living and Dying*, and Cæsar's *Commentaries*, lay within his reach, and judging from the marks of use which are upon them, must have been much read and often consulted.

The duke was most exact and particular in his correspondence. No letter, even the most eccentric, remained unanswered. When, indeed, numbers of persons took to writing to him for the mere purpose of obtaining his autograph, he so couched his replies as to meet the peculiarities of each case. There was much originality in these answers. Some ran thus: "F.M. the Duke of Wellington regrets that it is not in his power, etc., etc. He is one of the few persons in this country who don't meddle with matters with which they have no concern." Others took this turn:—"F.M. the Duke of Wellington can give no opinion upon a matter of which he knows nothing."

In 1845, when the queen paid him a visit at Strathfieldsaye, the newspaper reporters applied to him, according to the custom of the country, to be admitted into the house, in order that they might give an account of what was passing there. The duke wrote to them in these terms:—"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. ——, and begs to say that he does not see what his house at Strathfieldsaye has to do with the public press."

A gentleman of Belfast wrote to him the following letter:—"May it please your Grace, I have taken the liberty of requesting your opinion—Was Napoleon guilty or not of the murder of his prisoners at Jaffa? and if there is any military law or circumstance that would justify the deed?" The following was the duke's answer:—"F.M. the Duke of Wellington presents his compliments to Mr. H.; he has also received Mr. H.'s

letter, and begs leave to inform him, that he is not the historian of the wars of the French Republic in Egypt and Syria."

A great number of authors applied to the duke to subscribe to their works. His answer was always the same. "F.M. the Duke of Wellington begs to decline to give his name as a subscriber to the book in question. If he learns that it is a good book he may become a purchaser."

Equally characteristic were the duke's letters, whether of courtesy or of kindness. The author of the *Subaltern*, whose work obtained, perhaps, a greater measure of success than it deserved, was informed by some of his friends that it had attracted the attention of the Duke of Wellington, and the suggestion was made to him that he also should apply for leave to dedicate a new edition to the duke. He received by return of post the following answer:—

"London, *9th November*, 1826.

"Dear Sir,—I have this day received your letter of the 7th inst., and I beg to assure you that you have been correctly informed that I had read your work with the greatest interest, and that I admired the simplicity and truth with which you had related the various events which you had witnessed; the scenes in which you had been an actor, and the circumstances of the life which you had led as an officer of the 85th regiment, in the army in the Peninsula and the south of France.

"I should be happy to have an opportunity of testifying my sense of the merits of your work by consenting to the dedication to me of the second edition, only that I have long been under the necessity of declining to give a formal consent to receive the dedication of any work.

"I conceive that by such consent I give a sort of tacit guarantee of the contents of the work so dedicated. I know that I should be considered to have placed myself in that situation by some who might not, perhaps, approve of those contents. From what I have above stated, you will see that I could have no objection to stand in the situation described, in relation to your work; and I must admit that it would be better to draw a distinction between good and meritorious works and others, and to give my sanction, so far as to consent to receive the compliment of their dedication gives such sanction, to the first and not to the last. But then there comes another difficulty. Before I give such sanction I must peruse the work proposed to be dedicated to me; and I must confess that I have neither

time nor inclination to wade through the hundreds, I might almost say thousands, of volumes offered to my protection, in order to see whether their contents are such as that I can venture to become a species of guarantee for their truth, their fitness, etc., etc. I have therefore taken the idlest and the shortest way of getting out of this difficulty, by declining to give a formal consent to receive the dedication of any work. This mode of proceeding frequently gives me great pain; but in no instance has it given more than on this occasion, as you will perceive by the trouble which I give you to peruse, and myself to write, these reasons for declining to give a formal consent to accept the compliment which you have been so kind as to propose to me.

"If, however, you think proper to dedicate your second edition to me, you are perfectly at liberty to do so; and you cannot express in too strong terms my approbation and admiration of your interesting work.

"I have the honour to be, dear Sir,

"Yours most faithfully,

"WELLINGTON.

"I was informed when I landed at Dover in April of the change of your line of life and circumstances, by one of your former brother officers."

The individual to whom this letter was addressed derived from it, as may be supposed, the highest gratification; and the kindness which it manifested personally to himself ceased only with the life of the illustrious writer.

The duke's correspondence during the agitation of Lord Grey's Reform Bill was, as we have seen, immense. If printed in detail it would fill volumes; but a few specimens, merely to show upon what principle he acted, both as a public man and as an individual, may be with perfect propriety inserted here.

At a moment when the public mind was at the height of its agitation, I took the liberty of expressing by letter a wish that certain concessions should be made. The following is the duke's reply:—

"LONDON, *11th April*, 1831.

"I have received your letters of the 8th and 9th. It is curious enough that I, who have been the greatest reformer on earth, should be held up as an enemy to all reform. This assertion is neither more or less than one of the lying cries of the day.

"If by reform is meant parliamentary reform, or a change in the mode or system of representation, what I have said is, that I have never heard of a plan that was safe and practicable that would give satisfaction, and that while I was in office I should oppose myself to reform in parliament. This was in answer to Lord Grey on the first day of the session. I am still of the same opinion. I think that parliament has done its duty: that constituted as parliament is, having in it as a member every man noted in the country for his fortune, his talents, his science, his industry, or his influence; the first men of all professions, in all branches of trade and manufacture, connected with our colonies and settlements abroad, and representing, as it does, all the states of the United Kingdom, the government of the country is still a task almost more than human. To conduct the government would be impossible, if by reform the House of Commons should be brought to a greater degree under popular influence. Yet let those who wish for reform reflect for a moment where we should all stand if we were to lose for a day the protection of government.

"That is the ground upon which I stand with respect to the question of reform in general. I have more experience in the government of this country than any man now alive, as well as in foreign countries. I have no borough influence to lose, and I hate the whole concern too much to think of endeavouring to gain any. Ask the gentlemen of the Cinque Ports whether I have ever troubled any of them.

"On the other hand, I know that I should be the idol of the country if I could pretend to alter my opinion and alter my course. And I know that I exclude myself from political power by persevering in the course which I have taken. But nothing shall induce me to utter a word, either in public or in private, that I don't believe to be true. If it is God's will that this great country should be destroyed, and that mankind should be deprived of this last asylum of peace and happiness, be it so; but, as long as I can raise my voice, I will do so against the infatuated madness of the day.

"In respect to details, it has always appeared to me that the first step upon this subject was the most important. We talk of unrepresented great towns! These are towns which have all the benefit of being governed by the system of the British Constitution without the evil of elections. Look at Scotland. Does Scotland suffer because it has not the benefit of riotous elections? I think that reform in Scotland would be, and I

am certain would be thought, a grievance by many in that country. I can answer for there being many respectable men in Manchester, and I believe there are some in Birmingham and Leeds, who are adverse to change.

"But how is this change to be made? Either by adding to the number of representatives in parliament from England, or by disfranchising what are called the rotten boroughs! The first cannot be done without a departure from the basis and a breach of the Acts of Union. And, mind, a serious departure and breach of these acts, inasmuch as the limits of the extension could not be less than from fifteen to twenty towns. The last would be, in my opinion, a violation of the first and most important principle of the constitution, for no valid reason, and upon no ground whatever excepting a popular cry, and an apprehension of the consequences of resisting it. But this is not all. I confess that I see in thirty members for rotten boroughs thirty men, I don't care of what party, who would preserve the state of property as it is; who would maintain by their votes the Church of England, its possessions, its churches and universities, all our great institutions and corporations, the union with Scotland and Ireland, the connection of the country with its foreign colonies and possessions, the national honour abroad and its good faith with the king's subjects at home. I see men at the back of the government to enable it to protect individuals and their property against the injustice of the times, which would sacrifice all rights and all property to a description of plunder called general convenience and utility. I think it is the presence of this description of men in parliament with the country gentlemen, and the great merchants, bankers, and manufacturers, which constitutes the great difference between the House of Commons and those assemblies abroad called 'Chambers of Deputies.' It is by means of the representatives of the close corporations that the great proprietors of the country participate in political power. I don't think that we could spare thirty or forty of these representatives, or change them with advantage for thirty or forty members elected for the great towns by any new system. I am certain that the country would be injured by depriving men of great property of political power, besides the injury done to it by exposing the House of Commons to a greater degree of popular influence.

"You will observe that I have now considered only the smallest of all reforms—a reform which would satisfy nobody. Yet it cannot be adopted without a serious departure from

principle (principle in the maintenance of which the smallest as well as the greatest of us is interesed), and by running all the risks of those misfortunes which all wish to avoid.

"I tell you that we must not risk our great institutions and large properties, personal as well as real. If we do, there is not a man of this generation, so young, so old, so rich, so poor, so bold, so timid, as that he will not feel the consequences of this rashness. This opinion is founded not on reasoning only, but on experience, and I shall never cease to declare it."

Everybody at that time had some suggestion to make; and having, among others, consulted the duke on the propriety of forming constitutional societies, I received the following answer:—

"I quite concur in all that you suggest as steps to be taken, with the exception of the formation of societies. We must never forget the Roman Catholic Association in Ireland, in its various modifications and forms. There is nothing so easy as to give a society a constitutional title, and to hold out for it the most beneficent objects, and then to turn it to the most mischievous purposes. Those who have not had to deal with these mischievous societies, are not aware, as we 'hacks' are, of all that can be done with them. I don't think that I could belong to one that had the most innocent views and objects."

In 1834 Lord John Russell did me the unexpected favour to present me to the chaplaincy of Chelsea Hospital. As the offer of the appointment came entirely unsolicited, and as there was no accord at that time between Lord John's policy of parliamentary reform and the views which I was known to entertain, the circumstance naturally excited some surprise; and the same post which conveyed to his lordship my acknowledgments, carried a letter to the duke, stating how the case stood, and venturing to ask advice. I received, with the least delay possible, the following answer:—

"Strathfieldsaye, *12th February*, 1834.

"I was in town yesterday; and am just now returned, and have received your note.

"I don't think that it will be disagreeable to you, or will do any harm, to tell you what I know of your appointment.

"Lord John inquired about you from Lord Fitzroy Somerset,

who told him that he would apply to me about you. The object of the inquiry was to know whether you were a party-writer.

"I desired Lord Fitzroy to tell Lord John that you, as most other good clergymen of the Church of England, were a zealous Conservative politician; but that I did not believe you had ever been a party-writer; that when I was in office I was anxious to promote you in the Church . . . and that I had earnestly urged you, by all means in your power, to avoid party-discussions; that I never heard of your having engaged in them; and that I firmly believed you had not.

"I learned no more upon the subject till I received your letter.

"You see that the advice that I gave you was judicious; and that you are in the enjoyment of the advantage resulting from it.

"I shall be very sorry to lose your society at Walmer Castle, but I hope that I shall see you in London."

One more specimen, in rather a different style, and I pass on to other matters.

In 1836, a bill was brought in to effect certain changes in the constitution of the Scotch universities. It was greatly disliked by the High Church party in both kingdoms; and one of these, hoping to engage the duke's opposition to it, called his attention to its assumed defects. The following was the duke's answer:—

"London, *12th June*, 1836.

"The question of the Scotch universities has not escaped my attention. Care is taken that nothing should. Neither has it escaped me that this bill is founded on the report of a commission, appointed, I believe, by Sir Robert Peel in 1828. We cannot blow hot one day and cold another on such subjects: at least I cannot. Moreover, I know that I should have nobody to support me on that subject."

Of the duke's habits of patient industry it may well appear superfluous to speak. We have seen how in India, in the Spanish peninsula, and in France, hours which others would have devoted to necessary repose were spent by him in toil. And as if all this had not been sufficient to tax his energies fully, he seems to have made copies of many of his own letters, and to have arranged and docketed them all. This, indeed, was a practice which he appears very early to have begun, as

if there had been present with him from the outset a conviction that his name would sooner or later become historical, and that means ought to be at hand of connecting it only with the truths of history. And he never abandoned the habit to the end. Boxes of his papers, chronologically arranged, stood in their proper order at Apsley House when he died, and stand there still. When re-examined and re-sorted, a process to which the filial piety of his son is now subjecting them, they will account, in a great degree, for the manner in which every day of the duke's long life was spent.

A volume might be filled with anecdotes illustrative of various traits in the duke's character,—his perfect self-possession in moments of difficulty and danger, his kindly disposition, his wit, and severe wisdom.

Of his self-possession on the field of battle I have given in the course of this narrative several examples. Many more might be added did the occasion require; for no event in war appeared to take him by surprise, no blunder on the part of his subordinates discomposed him. He was equally calm and collected on other occasions less in unison, as might be assumed, with his professional habits. He never went to sea without encountering a storm; he never in the wildest hurricane exhibited the smallest token of alarm. At the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway,—an experiment, as was believed, full of peril,—he put himself with childlike docility into the hands of the engineers, and kept his seat, as they requested him to do, till the accident to Mr. Huskisson stopped the train. He was the first to reach the wounded man, and to speak words of comfort to him. Indeed he would have put a stop to the pageant, had it not been explained to him that great public inconvenience would have been the consequence. We have seen how he bore himself when threatened with assassination on the king's highway, and mobbed and assaulted in the streets of London, and as he was then, so he invariably appeared amid the bitterest struggles and perplexities of political life.

The duke's wit was sometimes caustic enough, but never ill-natured. A gentleman, not remarkable for always saying the right thing at the right moment, happened to dine in his company one day, and during a pause in the conversation, asked abruptly, "Duke, weren't you surprised at Waterloo?" "No," was the answer, delivered with a smile, "but I am now." When Sir De Lacy Evans' operations were going on near St.

Sebastian, the question was put, "What will all this produce?" "Probably," replied the duke, "two volumes in octavo." In 1815, the commissioners for the provisional government in France announced to him gravely that the empire was at an end. "I knew that a year ago." A colonial bishop having remonstrated with the secretary of state because military guards were not turned out and instructed to salute him, the minister sent the letter to the duke, who returned it with this remark upon the margin: "The only attention which soldiers are to pay to the bishop must be to his sermons." Sometimes the duke's *mots* hit harder than he intended them to do. The late Sir William Allen used to tell with great glee, that being sent for to receive the price of his picture of the Battle of Waterloo, he found the duke counting over whole piles of bank notes. Sir William, anxious to save the duke's time, ventured to observe that a cheque upon his grace's banker would serve the purpose quite as well as notes. Whereupon the duke, not over and above delighted with the interruption, looked up and said, "Do you think I am going to let Coutts' people know what a d—d fool I've been?" A cavalry regiment being suddenly ordered to the Cape, one of the officers, not remarkable for zeal in the performance of his duties, applied for leave to exchange. The memorandum was this: "He must sail or sell."

Of his kindly disposition, the following are manifestations. An old gentleman of the name of Robertson desired one day particularly to see him. He was admitted to an audience, and stated that he did not expect to live long, but could not die in peace without seeing the duke, and that he had travelled from Scotland for that single purpose. Touched with the old man's manner, the duke not only expressed his own gratification, but begged Mr. Robertson to stay and dine with him. "Many thanks," replied the old Scot, "I can't do that. I have seen your grace, and have now nothing more in this world to wish for:" and so withdrew.

He was walking one day in the streets of a manufacturing town, when an operative accosted, and desired permission to shake hands with him. "Certainly," replied the duke; "I am always happy to shake hands with an honest man."

He never met, in his rides and walks among the lanes near Walmer or Strathfieldsaye, any poor man who claimed to have served under him without giving him a sovereign. He used to laugh at himself for doing so, and acknowledged that it was ten

to one against the object of his bounty deserving it; but nothing would induce him to omit the practice.

But perhaps the most touching testimony to his gentleness is that which Mr. Richard Oastler, the great and honest mob orator, has placed on record. Describing an interview to which the duke admitted him, and his own embarrassment when he found himself closeted with the hero of the age, Mr. Oastler continues: "On that space" (a space free from papers on the sofa), "at the bidding of the duke, I sat. His grace standing before me said, 'Well, Mr. Oastler, what is it you wish to say to me?' I observed, 'It is very strange that I should sit while the Duke of Wellington stands, and in Apsley House too.' 'Oh,' said his grace, 'if you think so, and if it will please you better, I'll sit.' So saying, he took a seat on an easy-chair, between the sofa and the fireplace. I was then desired to proceed. Being strangely affected with a reception so very different from that anticipated, I expressed my surprise, and craved the duke's indulgence. Placing his right hand on my right shoulder, his grace said, 'We shall never get on if you are embarrassed. Forget that you are here; fancy yourself talking with one of your neighbours at Fixby, and proceed.'"

It is not worth while to transcribe more of what passed between them; but the result must be given in Mr. Oastler's words. "In a short time I returned to Huddersfield, met thousands of people at an out-door assembly, and told them all that the Duke of Wellington had told me. Oh how they cheered!"

The duke's wisdom, like that of other wise men, was shown more in his life than in his conversation; yet certain sayings of his have passed into aphorisms, and will never be forgotten while the English language exists. Here are a few of them:—

"A great country ought never to make little wars.

"Be discreet in all things, and so render it unnecessary to be mysterious about any.

"The history of a battle is like the history of a ball.

"Animosity among nations ought to cease when hostilities come to an end.

"He is most to blame who breaks the law, no matter what the provocation may be under which he acts.

"One country has no right to interfere in the internal affairs of another. Non-intervention is the law, intervention is only the exception."

The duke dined one day in Paris with M. Cambacères, one of the most renowned *gourmets* of France. The host having pressed a *recherché* dish upon the duke, asked eagerly, when the plate was cleared, how he had liked it. "It was excellent," replied the duke; "but to tell you the truth, I don't care much what I eat." "Good heavens!" exclaimed Cambacères, "don't care what you eat! Why then did you come here?"

It is a remarkable fact in this great man's history, that though always ready, often too ready, to expose himself in action, he never received a wound which left a scar behind. At Seringapatam, as his Indian correspondence shows, a bullet tore the cloth of his over-alls and grazed his knee. Again at Orthes, a spent ball struck him so sharply as to unhorse him. On this latter occasion, he was watching the progress of the battle,—General Alava sitting on horseback near him,—when a musket-ball struck the Spaniard severely on that part of the person, any injury done to which is the occasion more frequently of mirth than of commiseration. The duke, as was to be expected, laughed at Alava, but had not long enjoyed his joke, when another ball, after hitting the guard of his own sword glanced off, and gave him such a blow as caused him to spring from his saddle and fall to the ground. He got up, rubbed the part, laughed again, but rather more faintly, remounted, and went through the action; but for several days afterwards he was unable to ride, and suffered great pain.

It is almost more singular that he who carried on war in so many parts of the world should never have lost a gun to the enemy. "Returning with him one day from the hunting-field," says Lord Ellesmere, "I asked him whether he could form any calculation of the number of guns he had taken in the course of his career." "No," he replied, "not with any accuracy; somewhere about 3000, I should guess. At Oporto, after the passage of the Douro, I took the entire siege-train of the enemy; at Vittoria and Waterloo I took every gun they had in the field. What, however, is more extraordinary is, I don't think I ever lost a gun in my life. After the battle of Salamanca," he went on to explain, "three of my guns attached to some Portuguese cavalry were captured in a trifling affair near Madrid, but they were recovered the next day. In the Pyrenees, Lord Hill found himself obliged to throw eight or nine guns over a precipice; but those also were recovered, and never fell into the enemy's hands at all."

Though pretending to no eminence either in scholarship or

science, the duke entertained the greatest respect for both. On two separate occasions he expressed a desire to be elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. At first his meaning appears scarcely to have been understood, but the wish being repeated, the Royal Society at once, and with peculiar satisfaction, received him among its Fellows. He was proposed by the late Marquis of Northampton, and seconded by Sir Robert Harry Inglis; and he seems to have been better pleased with this distinction, than with many others conferred upon him by the sovereigns and peoples whom he had served. Again we find him brought into contrast with Napoleon, in a matter where, at first sight, it might appear that there was only parallelism. "I knew what I was about," said the French Emperor, "when I caused myself to be elected member of the Institute. Our soldiers follow me, not because I am brave, but because they believe me to be a man of genius and well read."

The duke's eye for a country was, as may be imagined, singularly accurate. He could take in at a glance all the features of any landscape through which he rode. And which was, perhaps, more remarkable, he seemed intuitively to divine the lie of a district beyond the limits to which his gaze extended. This was shown upon one occasion in rather a curious way.

He was going to visit a friend in Rutlandshire, and finding that Mr. Croker had received an invitation to the same house, he offered him a seat in his carriage. The offer was accepted, and the two travellers, after exhausting other topics, began to amuse themselves by guessing at the nature of the country which lay on the farther side of various ranges of hill and down, as they approached them. The duke's guesses proved on all occasions to be so correct, that Mr. Croker at last demanded the reason. "The reason?" replied the duke. "Why what have I been doing for the greater part of my life, except that which we are doing now,—trying to make out from what I saw the shape of the country which I could not see?"

Strange to say, however, the same man, whose faculties enabled him thus to draw inferences almost always correct in regard to great matters, was remarkable for his blunders in small matters of the same sort. The duke was noted for losing his way not only when riding back after reconnaissances before the enemy, but when returning home from the hunting-field near Strathfieldsaye.

Of the great tenacity of the duke's memory notice has been taken elsewhere. It never forsook him to the last. In 1843,

when the terror of the Seikh invasion was at its height, he was requested by the government of the day to draw up a plan for the defence of India. This paper or memorandum he read "with great emphasis" to Lord Ellesmere, who says, "It embraced all three presidencies, and was full of geographical details. It had been written, as he told me, without reference either to a map or a gazetteer."

It was soon after this, that when called upon to name three officers, one of whom might be selected to go out as Lord Gough's successor in command of the army, he wrote, "Sir Charles Napier, Sir Charles Napier, Sir Charles Napier."

I must bring these anecdotes to an end. Hundreds more, equally characteristic, are doubtless in circulation, every one of which deserves its own place here; but already the limits at my command are passed, the subject remaining still unexhausted. If told in detail, they could scarcely add to the measure of admiration in which, by all who know how to value real greatness, the memory of the Duke of Wellington is held. He was the grandest, because the truest man, whom modern times have produced. He was the wisest and most loyal subject that ever served and supported the English throne.

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